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THE

DAUGHTERS

OF

ISENBERG.

A BAVARIAN ROMANCE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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DAUGHTERS

OF

ISENBERG:

A BAVARIAN ROMANCE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY ALICIA TYNDAL PALMER;

AUTHOR OF

"The Husband and the Lover."

Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say, I had eyes again!

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LACKINGTON, ALLEN, AND CO.

TEMPLE OF THE MUSES, FINSBURY SQUARE,

BY J. HADDON, TABERNACLE WALK.

1810.

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THE DAUGHTERS OF ISENBERG.

CHAP. I.

It was not till the party had for some time been retired to rest, that the vehicle, containing the solitary Doctor Martimas, stopped at the hotel at Augsberg. This circumstance was, however, hailed by him with pleasure, for he felt little desire of again exposing himself that night to the animadversions of his young tormentors.

On the next morning, when Sigismond, at an early hour, entered the breakfast-room, he found there, alone, and sitting in a very pensive attitude, the Chevalier Florio, who appeared to

have been so completely pre-occupied, as to start, and change colour on perceiving his approach.

"I am glad to find that your accident has not proved sufficiently serious to confine you," said the youth, good-humouredly. "I feared, last evening, that you would have been more sensible to-day of your hurts, than immediately after receiving them. Have you heard how poor Miss Wanmore finds herself after her misfortunes?"

"The misfortunes of such a compound of every thing that is revolting and contemptible," replied Florio, drily, "whatever may be their nature, possess not the power of exciting in me one shadow of commiseration. I cannot, therefore, condescend to affect an interest in her concerns which I do not feel. But I beg pardon, I had forgotten that I

was addressing myself to one who does."

"As to interest in her concerns!" observed Sigismond, surprised at the Chevalier's speech, "I profess I am at a loss to comprehend you. The unlucky mischief which the poor girl met with last evening, Carenthéa assures me, she attributes entirely to my want of attention; common humanity, therefore——"

"I have never heard a single hint of any accident, or of the least want of attention on your part," interrupted Florio; "pray to what do you allude?"

Sigismond now detailed, with exquisite drollery, the adventure of Letitia and her veil; in the recapitulation of which, he gave such scope to his natural love of ridicule, and so highly coloured his descriptions, that Florio found it impossible to preserve

his gravity; and they were both indulging in an uncontrouled fit of laughter, when the theme of their mirth put an end to it by her appearance.

In the mean time, the anxious Villerose, during a ramble which he had been taking with the Baron, had disclosed to him the affection with which his youngest daughter had inspired him, and entreated that the reference she had given him to her parents might be favourably received by them.

That nobleman listened to the communication of his youthful companion without surprise, while a complacent indulgence marked the manner of his attending to him, sufficiently encouraging to dispel all fear of a refusal.

When Villerose paused for a reply, the Baron assured him of his entire

esteem and friendship, pledging himself for Madame Isenberg's approbation of his choice of Viola, provided a longer acquaintance with each other should mature that attachment, which, he said, he could not at present regard as more than in its infancy.

It was in vain that the impatient lover besought him to sanction the solemnization of their union, previous to his setting out for his estates. The Baron inflexibly refused to acquiesce in so hasty a measure, alleging that his daughter was too young, and the period of their partiality much too short for them to have been enabled to form that just estimate of each other's character and temper, so necessary to the insuring their future happiness. He endeavoured, however, to soften his positive disapprobation, of their so early contracting an irrevocable engagement, by remind-

ing Villerose, that in the intermediate time he should ever find himself a welcome guest at his chateau, where he would be furnished with opportunities of improving the partiality which already subsisted between them; and with this concession, though falling far short of his wishes, the Marquis was obliged, for the present, to content himself.

The Baron had urged in a tone which admitted not of reply, that he deemed some separation absolutely necessary, previous to any actual engagement on either side, in order to prove the stability of a preference, which, for ought he knew, might vanish with the object who had inspired it. He added his serious advice, that Villerose, in pursuance of the plan, from which he had deviated in accompanying Sigismond to their mansion, would visit his native country,

and arrange those affairs at his paternal estates, which must of course demand his superintendance.

Although the Marquis felt the doubts which induced his respected adviser to insist on these conditions to be treason against the most genuine of passions, he was forced to promise profiting by it; and before joining the family, he had consented to fix on an early period, after their return to Isenberg, on which to set out on this now reluctant journey.

They found, on entering the auberge, that Madame had requested to have her breakfast in her own room; to which the Baron immediately repaired, and acquainted her with the subject of the conference he had just had with their young guest. But to his surprise and disappointment, instead of perceiving that she participated in the satisfaction with which

he related the opening prospects of happiness for her favourite child, he observed that she remained silent, perplexed, and thoughtful, evidently labouring under some painful anxiety.

It was a considerable time before he drew from her an explanation of what affected the too apparent change in her sentiments since they had last made Villerose the subject of their conversation. At length, she confessed that she had again seen, or fancied she had seen, in the shrubbery of the auberge, on the preceding evening, the vision, which had so appalled her in the chapel of Isenberg, declaring, that she could not recal, without a chilling horror, for which it was impossible to account, the words of caution she had received from the phantom, *to banish the Marquis her children's presence, if she would herself*

obtain the so long sought blessing of the paternal pardon.

It was with a severe pang that the Baron listened to this new instance of the empire which superstition (the offspring in her breast of remorse) was acquiring over one so dear to him; and with all the energy an earnest desire to efface what he believed to be a groundless apprehension could inspire, he combated the doubts which disturbed her. He touched on the admirable character of Villerose, his amiable and attractive manners, his high rank, his family honours, his extensive property, the union in his person of all they could require to render him an object, the most eligible, for their child, supposing time should confirm their attachment. He reminded her how impossible it was that any enmity or dislike could exist on the part of the Count D'Aubry towards

him, since the Marquis had never from his early infancy inhabited his native soil, while on the contrary her father, from a still remoter period, had never quitted it. He concluded, by pledging himself, that, if the cause of her alarm was not wholly an illusion, (a circumstance he was much inclined to credit), it would be found to have been some mischievous trick, which, in wantonness or wickedness, had been practiced on her credulity.

As the Baron proceeded, he had the satisfaction to perceive that his words sunk into the mind of his lady, and produced there the effect he intended. Gradually her fine face resumed its naturally sweet expression, and she assured him of her entire approbation of that discretion which had actuated him to exact Villerose's visit to his estates, previous to his forming an indissoluble engagement with their

child. She observed, that she felt persuaded an attachment, founded on the basis she believed his to be, would stand the test of time and absence; yet she rejoiced, that, by putting it to that trial, they should have an opportunity of at once proving its stability, and convincing herself of the fallacy of those vague doubts, which had at first obscured the pleasure with which she now considered the subject.

While this conversation was passing, Villerose, who had been too much agitated by that in which he had recently taken a part with the Baron, to have accompanied him into the breakfast-room, was endeavouring on the banks of the Lech to regain his composure, and reconcile himself to the imposed banishment from all, that in his present state of mind, appeared interesting to him in life.

As he paced the margin of the river, he sought to console himself for the separation to which he had promised to submit, by reflecting on the certainty of having secured the approbation of his noble hosts to his future union with their child; while he resolved that his journey to France should be rapid, and his stay there barely sufficient to execute what the Baron had exacted of him.

"Good God!" cried he, "that he could read my heart! That he could be sensible what happiness he withholds from it, by refusing the privilege of carrying with me to those abodes of my ancestors, her, who is destined to be their future mistress! With what different sensations should I then anticipate this first return to my native land! With her I should feel that I was approaching my home—now every step which carries me nearer to it, will

lengthen the distance that separates me from her—from her ! who in the interval may be approached by some happy rival. But no ! could I seriously harbour such a thought, I should be indeed unworthy the invaluable preference with which she honours me !"

He now for a considerable time stood silently contemplating the united streams of the Lech and the Wartech, as they majestically rolled their mingled waters past him. At length he exclaimed, " Yes, Viola ! thus would I blend our fates ! Together thus should the current of our future lives glide imperceptibly on !"

Time rolled unheededly away by the Marquis, while his mind was thus pre-occupied ; nor did it once occur to him, that his long absence from the rest of the party might create sufficient surprise and curiosity amongst

them to expose him to a raillery, for which he was ill disposed.

All however of that party, save one, were too much engaged with the conversation which was passing at the breakfast table, to remark that Villerose was not amongst them. The chevalier Florio, with his wonted caprice, (unmindful how very inconsistent it was with the contempt he had not long before expressed for Miss Wanmore) on the entrance of that young lady, started from his seat, handed her to a chair, and placing himself beside her, had with great assiduity laid himself out to please her, by innumerable little attentions calculated to promote that object. These he so well seconded by highly seasoned compliments, that Letitia, who felt immediately convinced she had made of him a conquest, became intoxicated with pleasure, and hesitated not mentally to

pronounce, that Florio, animated as he now appeared by his new-born passion, was not only far handsomer, but infinitely more interesting than the comparatively inattentive, cold, and insensible Sigismond.

Miss Wanmore was, however, the only one present, who was for a moment deceived as to the chevalier's real opinion of her—for even his most extravagant flattery was so artfully expressed, as to bear two separate interpretations, not the least obvious of which (to every one but Miss Wanmore) pointedly marked his sense of the glaring follies of her character, while that in which she took them, soothed and inflated her inordinate vanity.

The entrance of Doctor Martimas had not in the least checked the flow of Florio's eloquence, which that gentleman remarking, for awhile listened

to his rhapsodies with the charitable wish, and sanguine expectation, of soon finding some fair opportunity, at once to silence his orator, and cover him with confusion, by convicting him from his own words, of possessing but very shallow pretensions to the high estimation in which he evidently gloried in standing with his female auditors.

"My error," thought the Doctor, "has been that of never having condescended to attend to his frothy prattle, from which omission, I have no doubt lost many fair occasions, on which to strike him dumb by making manifest his emptiness! Hence has arisen that want of deference he has hitherto shewn me. Let me repair the fault, and teach this tinseled youth, the weight which the learned man must ever possess, when opposed in conversation to the shallow coxcomb!"

Yet the awkward dilemna into which the Doctor had brought himself by his late rude attack on the *ladies' favorite,* at Isenberg, being still fresh in his memory, he resolved he would not, by forgetting his good manners, again insure the disapprobation of those whose suffrages he was now desirous of obtaining. Softening, therefore his voice and manner, and with the air of one who wishes to *instruct* rather than *reprove,* he began by pointing out to the company, and gently marking to Florio in particular, the very pernicious effects of that flattery to which he was so prone; a practice, he observed, in which nothing but a total want of reflection, could justify any one's persisting; since it was not only condemned by all the truly wise, but every being carried in his own bosom a secret monitor to warn him against

imposing so base a deception on the vain and credulous.

"To what end," pursued the Doctor, perceiving he had arrested general attention, and convinced that this was the moment to exalt himself at the Chevalier's expense, "To what end, young gentleman should you, by teaching others to think more highly of themselves, than their merits warrant, seek to deceive and mislead them? Is it judicious? Do you imagine that nature has not implanted in every breast a sufficient portion of self-love for the good of the individual, and the happiness of the whole, that you so constantly endeavor to inflate that innate principle, by the application of so great a bane of society as flattery? Fie, fie! leave off a practice so unjustifiable—so inimical to the true happiness of our species—a practice which

is in itself so thoroughly despicable, that not an argument can be brought forward in its justification."

The Chevalier, to the surprise of every one present, instead of testifying impatience or displeasure at this harangue, gave it the most profound attention, nor did he once attempt to interrupt the speaker, but on seeing him steadily fix his small grey eyes on him, at the conclusion, with the triumphant air of one who believes he has silenced his opponent, with infinite good humour, he thus replied:

"There are few causes, my good sir, so bad, that a skilful orator cannot say much in their favor. For myself thus called on, I should ill merit the approbation with which my partial friends honor me, were I not to controvert the very erroneous doctrines you have just laid down. I well know it is a fashion amongst many to decry

flattery, as they call the innocent and amiable endeavour to make others pleased with themselves; but let me ask, by whom is it decried? I firmly believe only by those who take umbrage at the name, rather than the thing itself. Such persons imagine that complaisance is incompatible with good faith!—Ill founded opinion! *Flattery* is the offspring of gentleness, of goodness, of benevolence of nature, and as nearly allied to virtue, as the rude, the savage, the abrupt, the unpolite character is remote from her! Who can deny that *Flattery* re-animates the hearts of those who are discouraged, enlivens the melancholy, spurs on to exertion the idle, awakens the stupid, comforts the unhappy, appeases the angry, creates love and maintains it?—All this she does, and more. She teaches children to relish the labours of study, she revi-

vifies the old, and under the mask of praise, she instructs, without offending, princes. She teaches all men to be more or less pleased with themselves, and rely on it, on this *self-satisfaction* depends the happiness of life. Reciprocal flattery, therefore, necessarily creates the charm and relish of human intercourse. You will doubtless urge that it is a heavy misfortune to be deceived; I maintain on the contrary, that, *not* to be *agreeably* deceived, is the actual misfortune; since it is the extravagance of folly to place the felicity of man in the reality of things, when it depends solely on his opinion of them. So variable, so uncertain, so opposite are the opinions and tastes of man, that he must be presumptuous indeed, who will arrogate to himself the power of distinguishing the *real* from the *imaginary*,

the suppositious from the subtantial good!"

So great was the astonishment with which Doctor Martimas listened to the ingenious self defence of one, whom he had hitherto esteemed as the most silly and ignorant of youths, that, as he proceeded, he gradually forgot, in the pride of having awakened him to a display of his naturally excellent understanding, the intention with which he had opened his hostile attack on him—and with that real goodness of heart, which, when out of humour, his rough and overbearing manners so frequently concealed, he complimented Florio in the most friendly tone, on the good sense he had displayed in finding excuses so plausible for a practice, which he ingenuously acknowledged, he had believed would have been found by him to be utterly indefensible.

"I perceive, Doctor," said the Chevalier, gracefully, "that you and I shall mutually improve upon a more intimate acquaintance; and, as a proof that though I persist on principle in maintaining *flattery* to bear in her train more of good than evil, I will convince you that there are cases in which I scorn to deceive, or accept praise which is due to another. For the arguments I have been adducing in my own vindication, I am wholly indebted to Erasmus, of whose "Eulogium of Folly" I am so devoted an admirer, that in solitude I usually make it my companion, and not unfrequently form my own conduct on his amusing maxims."

"No one ever knew better than Erasmus how to render flattery the medium of instruction," observed Delmond; "nor can we doubt, that, in his panegyric of the Duke of Bur-

gundy, he rather meant to paint what a good prince should be, than to delineate the real picture of Philip."

"It is many years since I have perused his pages," said Doctor Martimas; "I cannot say that Erasmus was ever much to my taste."

"I should greatly like," replied the Chevalier, "to awaken in you a relish of the exquisite good sense with which he panegyrizes *Folly*, or rather makes that lady plead her own cause, which she does with so irresistible a success, that you shall confess sober wisdom is obliged to hide her diminished head. Come," added he, gaily, as he drew a small volume from his pocket, "come, we will begin the attempt. Now, you must suppose me personifying the heroine of our author—I think, Doctor, you will, in consideration of the reciter, dispense with my cap and bells. Thus then

speaks *Folly;*" and, with a vivacity and humour which in his happiest moments distinguished him, opening the book at random, he thus began:

"Every one knows that the early years of man are the most gay, the most agreeable of his life. Yet what renders children so bewitching? Why do we kiss them, fondle them, cherish them? Why does even an enemy soften into tenderness towards them, and willingly assist their little wants?

"It is because nature, that wise artificer, has impressed on children the charm, the attraction of *folly*. She has thus furnished them with a recompense, by which they are enabled to sweeten the pains of those who rear them. These protectors love the early youth which succeeds to infancy —they delight in becoming useful to it, in admiring it, in assisting it.

Whence then does adolescence receive its fascination, if not from *me*? From me, who render it sportive, pleasing, diverting? From the period at which youth begins to assume manhood, when, conducted by instruction and worldly knowledge, he enters the gloomy precincts of wisdom, his gaiety relaxes, he no longer displays the same careless graces, his fire is gradually extinguished, his vivacity depressed—in a word, the more man estranges himself from *me*, the less enjoyment he has of life, and in sadness does he pursue that career, which terminates in a sorrowful and comfortless old age, in which he is not less insupportable to others than himself. Touched with pity at his lot, I extend towards him *my* succouring hand, and do all I can for his relief, by restoring him to a second childhood."

"Now, my good Sir," said Florio, closing the volume, and addressing the Doctor, "to tell you candidly my rule of action, it is never entirely to lose sight of this bewitching *Folly*. —I court her, flatter her, and in return she rarely deserts me, but stationing herself at my elbow, inspires me with the many whimsical eccentricities, which render me acceptable to those whom I am most ambitious of amusing. I perceive you are about to say that I too devotedly solicit her inspirations. In recompense for your friendly hint, I will whisper you, that if you will allow me to reconcile you to a lady, against whom you have conceived a very ill-placed prejudice, and in future never, by stern looks and severe rebukes, drive her from you, she will endow you with a thousand nameless *agremens*, the advantages of which you have at present no

idea. To shew you how earnest I am to reconcile you to my favourite, I will meet you half way, and by admitting that *I* have too sedulously encouraged her society, pique your generosity into not persisting utterly to reject it. Perhaps *I* have devoted too much time to the perusal of her "Eulogy," *you* too little—thus let us compromise the business." And as he spoke presenting him the book, he added—"Accept, my good Sir, this tribute of esteem, as a testimony that I would obliterate the ill impression our different mediums of viewing the same objects have given you of me; and be persuaded, that, if mine has not hitherto been the wisest, it has certainly not proved the least agreeable."

Doctor Martimas, at once surprised and pleased in spite of himself, by the amiable good humour with which the

Chevalier had parried his attack, and the flattering desire he had manifested of reconciling him to those singularities, which rendered him so acceptable to many of the party, received with a gracious smile the proffered peace-offering; and for the remainder of the day preserved such unusual urbanity of manners, as even to permit the Lady Marguerite unquestioned and uncontradicted to discourse at pleasure.

On their way to the cathedral of Augsberg, whither the party repaired soon after the Baron, his lady, and Villerose had joined them, Sigismond familiarly passing his arm through that of the Chevalier, jocosely told him, that he had never acted more completely under the inspiration of *Folly*, than when he sought to render the Doctor one of her *avowed* votaries.

"However he may flatter himself that

he is a disciple of Wisdom," pursued he, "Martimas has evidently no more legitimate claim to her guidance than ourselves. Is he not for ever proving the truth of this observation by his absurdity in gravely attacking the pretensions of the good old spinster, my aunt, to erudition? with various other instances which I could easily cite. Yes, yes, believe me, *Folly* has merely treated him as she finds it necessary to do with her other refractory subjects, by hoodwinking she hides from themselves what is visible enough to others; that while, thus blinded, they fancy they are sagaciously pursuing the path of *wisdom,* they are but trudging with the multitude of *willing* followers along her own broad road."

The party at that moment entered the cathedral of Augsburg, within whose sacred walls they were shewn the arms of all the countries once un-

der the dominion of the Emperor Charles V., which had been there deposited by that once powerful monarch.

The desire Don Alphonso had expressed of visiting the spot on which so great an hereditary King of Spain had executed the singular act of abdicating his throne at the age of fifty-six in favour of his son, had induced the Baron to extend their excursion to this city; and De Lerma, with a feeling little short of veneration, here contemplated the sword, the standard, the sceptre, and the crown, which that prince had yielded up as a votive offering, previous to his voluntarily abandoning the world, to pass his future days in the retirement and gloom of the monastery of St. Justus in Estramadura.

"Whoever gave a more striking instance of the empire which *Folly* has

at some period of their lives obtained over many of the most distinguished of mankind, than the Emperor Charles V.?" said Delmond, referring to the conversation which had recently taken place.

"If you mean in his retiring from a throne, which he felt conscious his declining health unfitted him for filling with his former ability," replied the Baron, "I by no means subscribe to the justice of your observation. In my opinion, his yielding it up to a successor, whom he flattered himself would wield the sceptre with more benefit to his subjects, may be deemed, on the contrary, a proof of genuine wisdom—while his voluntary abandonment of power, dominion, and all the glory which can charm the ambitious, strikes me as an admirable instance of magnanimity."

"Whatever specimen of magnani-

mity Charles might have given in his *resignation* of his crown," said Villerose, "I know not one of his acts while *wearing* it, which bears the stamp of that heaven-born sentiment. That he possessed claims to great abilities as a politician and a general, no one can deny; but in his whole life I have vainly sought for one instance of that true greatness of soul, which is incapable of requiting benefits received with ingratitude, of condescending to deceive, or of meanly triumphing over a fallen enemy."

"You surprise me, my friend," said De Lerma, "by the severity with which you judge a prince, whom I have seldom heard mentioned without admiration! I hope for the honour of his memory you will find it difficult to establish an opinion, which certainly appears to me ill founded."

"Nay, out of his own actions shall

you judge him," replied the Marquis. "What was the reward he bestowed on the venerable Cardinal Ximenes for the ability and integrity with which that extraordinary man governed Castile, during the period that, by the will of his grandfather, it was entrusted to him? On the young monarch's first visit to that kingdom, when the exemplary sage delivered it up to him, placed by his wise administration in a state far more flourishing than any former age had seen it, and with the regal authority more firmly established than even the most illustrious of his ancestors had been, Charles requited him, by coldly dismissing him his future councils and services. Cut to the soul by a treatment so little merited, and foreseeing the calamities to which his country would be exposed from the insolence, rapaciousness, and ignorance of those who were

to succeed him, the wonted firmness of Ximenes forsook him, his generous heart could not endure the stings of ingratitude, and he expired of grief a few hours after reading the letter of Charles which announced his disgrace. After he had arrived at the imperial dignity, when the fortune of war had thrown the frank and generous Francis within his power, how odious was the hypocrisy under which he, at first, by a shew of regret at that Prince's misfortune, endeavoured to veil his secret exultation at his rival's humiliation; and how equally inconsistent with his pretended sorrow, and unworthy a generous soul, was the subsequent severity of his conduct towards the captive king."

"I profess I have never before viewed those actions of Charles in the light in which you now place them," replied De Lerma. "For the first I have

nothing to offer in extenuation; but the second I think admits of much. It was doubtless the policy of the Emperor, by humbling the French monarch, and rendering him still more uneasy under his captivity, to dispose him with greater readiness to accede to those terms which, as his conqueror, he thought himself justified in exacting as the price of his liberty On the other hand, when we examine the artifice which Francis condescended to practice, in order to excuse to his conscience, his predetermination to elude the fulfilment of the conditions to which he subscribed, as the price of his ransom, we can scarcely deny that he merited all the mortification to which he was exposed. If the behaviour of the Emperor, in the first hour of victory was inconsistent with his subsequent conduct towards Francis, surely that of the French monarch

was not less so; whose mind appears to have sunk with his fortune. Who does not pity him, when on his defeat, he thus nobly expresses himself to his mother in the letter which tells of his disasters, "*All is lost, Madam, but honor?*" Yet, after his long imprisonment, who sympathises in his selfish joy, on entering his dominions, when they consider he did so at the expense of *that honour?* Nor can I pardon him the feeling which on that memorable occasion actuated him, when (forgetting that at the moment of his restoration to his country, he was delivering his children into the hands of his enemy, as pledges of those engagements he never meant to fulfil) he gave way to an exultation rendered contemptible by the circumstances under which it was indulged——"

"You doubtless mean," abruptly interrupted Doctor Martimas, "his

mounting his horse as soon as he had touched the soil of France, and galloping off, as he waved his hand, repeatedly exclaiming, *I am yet a king! I am yet a king!*"

The assenting bow of Don Alphonso, informed the speaker that he had named the circumstance to which he had alluded.

"No one can be less disposed than myself," replied Villerose, "to attempt to qualify or defend the blameable actions of Francis, many of which I hold in as thorough abhorrence, as those of the Emperor which I have just mentioned."

"Every lover of the fine arts," said Delmond, "must remember with gratitude the uniform patronage and encouragement they received under the reign of Francis I., who certainly, whatever might have been his faults, merited the honour he acquired, of being denominated their Father."

"That encouragement," rejoined Doctor Martimas, "I perceive disposes you, Mr. Delmond, to treat his memory with greater indulgence than that of his rival; and it certainly ought to cover, if not obliterate his minor faults. But there are on record, some of that monarch's actions, which I esteem of so monstrous a nature, that I scarcely know any of Charles's equally detestible! Nay, I will go so far as to assert, that they disqualify him from meriting the epithet of *frank* and *generous*, with which the marquis, in common with most historians, has honoured him. I more particularly refer to his conduct in relentlessly punishing with a cruel and lingering death, some unfortunate protestant converts, for their indiscreet zeal in distributing papers containing disrespectful reflections on the rights of the Romish church. This was not

enough; Francis pretended to be so struck with horror at their blasphemy, that he, in person, uncovered; and accompanied by the Princes of the blood, marched before the victims in solemn procession to the place of execution; and there in presence of a numerous assembly declared, *If one of his hands was affected with heresy, he would cut it off with the other; adding, I would sacrifice even my own children if found guilty of that crime.*"

"Should this action of Francis have been the effect of blind bigotry, as there can be but little doubt that it was," said Lady Aberdale, "it would be charitable in us, to regard it rather with pity, than severe condemnation. While committing so cruel an act, he probably believed it was acceptable to heaven."

"If his subsequent conduct had not proved that to be impossible," re-

plied Doctor Martimas, "I should myself justly deserve the censure your ladyship's remark implies; but I am prepared to shew its fallacy. Mark, in what way this same Prince not long after acted. He formed a league of amity with Solyman the magnificent, and did not scruple to accept the aid of that Sultan's *infidel* troops, for the subjugation of a part of *Christendom*. Had the French Monarch's power, at that time equaled his eager wishes to co-operate with the Turkish invaders, who landed in Naples under their commander Barbarossa, and had he not been struck with terror at the universal indignation his unnatural and impious alliance had excited, Francis would scarcely have found *that religion*, which had not proved a barrier to his connecting himself with its enemies, a sufficient check to his continuing to them his aid, for the sake of

gratifying his hatred towards the Emperor."

"I think not indeed," said Lady Aberdale, "Francis must have been the most hypocritical, or the most inconsistent of men."

"Not quite the *most* hypocritical;" observed Villerose, smiling, "I think I can cite you an instance of Charles, which gives him at least an equal claim to the superlative degree of duplicity. I mean his pretended sorrow at the pillage of Rome; and the captivity of the Pope by the army, led to that capital under the Duke de Bourbon, which he had previously encouraged to the enterprise by his specious promises. When the tidings reached the Emperor, that Clement, who had taken refuge in the castle of St. Angelo, had been obliged to surrender at discretion to the ravagers, Charles listened to the intelli-

gence with equal surprise and pleasure. Yet thinking it politic to conceal his joy from his Spanish subjects, who were filled with horror at the indignity offered to the sovereign Pontiff; and desirous of lessening the general indignation excited against him, he affected the deepest sorrow at the success of *his* arms, put himself, and his whole court into mourning, suspended the rejoicings which were taking place at the birth of his son Philip, and ordered prayers to be offered up in all the churches of Spain for the liberation of his Holiness, when he well knew that he could himself have procured that object, by simply signifying to his generals, that such was his pleasure."

"Tush, tush, man!" cried Sigismond, humourously, "wot ye not that politicians dignify such little covert acts, with the qualifying name of

policy ; exonerating thereby the practiser from that disgrace and odium with which the vulgar are apt to load *hypocrisy* among their equals."

"Yet I doubt" replied the Marquis, "if even the vulgar know not well to distinguish a magnanimous, from what is called a *politic* ruler—yes, and appreciate him too! Nature has implanted in every human soul (however lowly classed in society) a feeling which is spontaneously roused to enthusiastic love, by actions which are truly noble—a feeling! which forces the individual to venerate the godlike sovereign, who, like his Creator, makes mercy, benificence, and forgiveness of injuries his attributes! Such a monarch proves himself worthy the power with which that Creator has intrusted him over the lives and happiness of his fellow creatures. Could any one ever listen without ad-

miration to the answer given by Louis XII. to one of his courtiers, who urged him to confiscate the property of a citizen of Orleans, because the man had shewn an open hatred towards that monarch before his ascending the throne?"

"I was not his king," replied the magnanimous Louis, "when he offended me; and in becoming so, I became his father, consequently am compelled to pardon him."

"What must the heart of that citizen have been," said Lady Aberdale, "if he became not from that moment the most loyal of his subjects?"

"The hearts of the citizens of Ghent, in which place Charles V. was born, were doubtless made of the same materials," replied Villerosc; "yet how different was the conduct of that monarch towards them, when, like repenting children, they threw them-

selves on his mercy. Disgusted by some impositions that he had sanctioned, and which they felt to be unjust, they, for awhile, threw off their allegiance, and solicited the aid of Francis in resisting the Emperor's authority. The French king at first listened to their proposals with indulgence, which induced them unreservedly to confide their affairs to him, and he requited their confidence by betraying them to his rival. What an occasion was here offered Charles of establishing his future empire in the *hearts* of these his contrite subjects, and of infinitely exalting himself in their esteem on a comparison with his rival! That rival had requited their reliance on his honour, by delivering them up to the vengeance of an exasperated sovereign, from whom they had exposed themselves by their revolt to the most exemplary punishment! Had

Charles possessed grandeur of soul, or true generosity, what a moment presented itself to have exercised them! The deluded citizens, knowing themselves to have been betrayed by Francis, and learning that the Emperor, with a mighty force, was approaching their rebellious city, sent deputies to implore his clemency, and offered to throw open their gates to receive him. But the soul of Charles was a stranger to magnanimity—in the present instance it was filled alone with rage. Breathing only revenge, he replied, that *he would appear amongst them as a sovereign and a judge with the sceptre and the sword.* He fulfilled his promise. It was on his birth-day that the Emperor entered this his native city; but far from permitting these circumstances to move his heart to lenity, he exhibited an awful lesson of the stern and cruel inflexibility of

his nature. He immediately caused twenty-six of the principal citizens to be put to death, banished a still greater number, declared the city to have forfeited all its privileges, levied a heavy fine on the wretched inhabitants for the purpose of erecting a citidel, and burthened them with an annual tax for the support of a garrison. Thus, not content with despoiling them of their ancient immunities, he compelled them, like a conquered people, to furnish the means of perpetuating their own slavery. How much more delightful a way was open to Charles by which he might have secured the future *willing* obedience of its inhabitants, had he, on entering Ghent, armed with ample power to have annihilated the offenders, nobly forborne to strike! What a lasting monument of personal affection must he have raised in their hearts, when they compared his con-

duct towards them with that of the perfidious Francis!"

"Your ideas on this subject, Marquis, do honour to your heart," said Lady Aberdale; "yet I doubt not but experienced politicians would find many plausible arguments to excuse the severity of the Emperor in this instance."

"Very probably," replied Villerose, "and also his total want of feeling and generosity towards the protestant princes of Germany who fell within his power; but, in my opinion, they are such incontestible proofs of his illiberal and narrow policy, that I find it impossible to participate in the veneration in which De Lerma holds his memory."

I agree with the Marquis in his condemnation of those actions of the Emperor which he has been citing," observed the Baron; "yet I cannot

think that either of them bear the stamp of that *folly* which Delmond just now accused him of having exhibited."

"The instance to which I referred took place after he had resigned the throne," replied Delmond; "I mean having caused the ceremony of his funeral to *precede* his death, himself accompanying the procession on foot, habited in his shroud. This appears to me an extravagance, which well deserves the epithet of which I made use, in allusion to so preposterous a piece of mummery."

"His funeral precede his death!" exclaimed the astonished Miss Wanmore, who had a minute before joined them. "Bless me! what a shocking idea! Do pray tell me how it happened, for I am sure it must have been some very strange circumstance, which could induce any person to

choose so unbecoming a dress as a shroud to walk in on a procession."

"The person of whom we were speaking, charming Letitia," said the Chevalier, "was the Emperor Charles V., who sought rather to render himself acceptable in the eyes of *heaven*, by thus extraordinarily celebrating his own obsequies than in those of your lovely sex. In the hope of doing so by this eccentric plan, he caused his tomb to be erected in the chapel of his monastery; after which his attendants walked thither in funeral procession, and Charles followed them, clad as Monsieur Delmond has just related, in his shroud. He was then laid in his coffin, and the service of the dead chaunted over him, himself joining in the prayers which were put up for the repose of his soul, and mingling his tears with those which

his attendants shed, as if they had been celebrating a real funeral."

The Lady Marguerite, who during this conversation had been detaining Sir Launcelot, the Baroness, her two eldest nieces, and Miss Wanmore, at the large brazen gate of the cathedral, for the purpose of explaining to them the several passages which were finely represented on it in basso relievo, now, with her companions, joined their friends, and they soon after quitted the sacred edifice. The remainder of that day, and the next, was passed by our travellers in visiting the several curious cabinets of Augsberg, the magnificent town-house, so well worthy inspection, in which the protestant princes presented their confession of faith to Charles V., since denominated the *Augsberg confession*; and that remarkable specimen of the

powers of mechanism, called the *Secret Gate*, an entrance so contrived by means of engines, divisions, and stations for guards at judicious distances, for the examination of passengers, that persons were admitted through it without endangering the surprise of the town in time of war.

CHAP. II.

THE last day, which was passed by our travellers at Augsberg, Lady Aberdale, declining to accompany them on their morning's research, in consequence of having over fatigued herself on the preceding evening, Sir Launcelet said, with her ladyship's permission, he would remain with her during their friend's absence.

The proposal was thankfully accepted, and as soon as they were left *tête-à-tête,* he checked an observation she had begun on her son's filial gallantry, by informing her that she would greatly oblige him by detailing the particulars of the accident which had befallen Pauline and herself the

year before. He added, that the remarkable and affecting change which had taken place in that amiable girl excited in him so lively an interest, that he was very desirous of himself judging, if the event to which she had alluded could have left so deep an impression on her mind, as to have altered the cheerfully even tenor of her disposition into one so strikingly the reverse. Lady Aberdale immediately complied with his request, and informed Sir Launcelot of all she knew of that extraordinary event; but as there were circumstances attending it, with which she was herself acquainted, the reader will find them more fully related in the following narrative:

Lady Aberdale, fearing the comparative solitude of Rhonberg with her home might operate in giving to her

beloved charge's character too serious a cast, had the preceding year projected an excursion, which she hoped to render equally delightful and instructive to the amiable Pauline. With this view, she directed their route towards the Tyrol, well knowing it was one peculiarly calculated to answer the desired purpose, from the many interesting objects which in their course would rouse curiosity and quicken enquiry.

Our travellers had on the third day proceeded through a country flanked by snow-capt mountains, which, in dazzling majesty, coldly, and proudly defied even the glowing suns of August, and were arrived within two leagues of the small town of **Zurl**, when Lady Aberdale called Pauline's attention to a tremendously steep rock, separated by the road from the river Inn. "It is called," said Lady Aber-

dale, "the Emperor's rock, from an extraordinary adventure with which Maximilian I. is here reported to have encountered. That prince, whilst hunting the wild goat, carried away by the ardour of the chace, became lost in a labyrinth among these huge mountains, where he found himself surrounded on all sides by frightful precipices, which seemed sternly to forbid all hope of return. In this distressed situation he is said to have continued two days and nights, when Heaven sent to his aid a youth, in the habit of a peasant, who kindly requested Maximilian to follow him. The royal fugitive complied, and was presently led by his guide into a safe road; but ere the prince could turn from observing its direction to thank his deliverer, he had disappeared!

Pauline was going to enquire, whether, after he became emperor, he ever

sought out and rewarded his preserver, when she was suddenly checked, by observing a party of horsemen armed as soldiers, who were issuing out one by one through a defile in the rock, which had been the subject of their discourse. They had passed to the number of ten, when they turned, halted, and as the carriage approached, presented their carabines to the drivers, ordering them at the same time to enter the narrow opening, through which they had themselves just found a passage. The terrified postillions obeyed, and the no less terrified footmen followed their example. On entering it, they perceived another party of horsemen, evidently belonging to their conductors, since, on seeing the chaise, they immediately wheeled about and preceded it.

After they had travelled rapidly in this order for some time, the road wi-

dened, and they again halted by the command of one of the party, who, advancing to the side of the carriage, opened the door, and requesting permission to enter, informed the ladies, that they must submit to wear for a few hours a bandeau across their eyes. Lady Aberdale set an example of obedience to the terror-struck Pauline, and they again proceeded forward in a silence unbroken, except by the measured steps of the horses, as they apparently climbed with patient labour some steep acclivity.

Suddenly the trampling of more impetuous steeds was heard, and almost at the same moment a loud and agitated voice exclaiming—"Cowards! villains! be men! and save the lives and honour of your ladies!"

There was something in the voice, broken as it was by emotion, which startled Pauline by its familiarity to

her ear, and the flatterer, Hope, whispered that succour was at hand; but her confidence in these promises, and reason itself were nearly annihilated when she heard the firing of carabines and the clashing of swords, mingled with fierce execrations and dreadful groans. During this ireful contention, the horses of the carriage were urged on with a speed which soon left the tumultuous din behind; but left not with it the terrors of Pauline. To apprehensions for herself and friend, were added scarcely less poignant ones for the noble being who had, as she believed, at the expense of his own life, attempted their rescue.

Overwhelmed with contending emotions, the travellers sought not to communicate sensations, easier felt than expressed, but locked in each other's arms, silently awaited the termination of their alarming adventure.

Again all sounds were hushed, but those of the horses and carriage; and in gloom and dread they had passed some hours, when the road suddenly returned a deep and hollow sound, accompanied by so violent a rocking of the vehicle, that the inexperienced Pauline, instantly struck with the idea that they should be dashed down the clefts of one of the riven rocks over which Lady Aberdale's account of these heights, had taught her to believe they were erroneously wandering, started from the arms of her friend, and with frenzied strength tore the bandage from her eyes, they opened on utter darkness! Thus left to its magnifying effects, she lost all self-command, wildly screamed her fears, and piteously implored assistance; but she screamed, she implored in vain! In this state of encreasing terror it was long before Lady Aberdale could suc-

ceed in reasoning her into the necessity of sparing the strength and spirits of both, by suppressing such violent expressions of fear, since they were not more useless than enervating.

Shrill whistles now, at intervals, pierced their ears, which were from time to time answered by the discordant blasts of horns. That these were signals which concerned them, Pauline could not doubt, and they fell heavy and damp on her heart, as the warning of approaching death!

A dim light, at length, shewed the prisoners that they had entered a dark dank cavern! As it gleamed on the rough obscurities of the dreary vault above, it gave to them a partial view of the murky horrors in which she believed they were to be entombed alive; and at the same time shed on the imperfect forms which presently appeared passing and repassing through

a distant arch, a yellow light, which threw over them a hue, too much in character with the more than Tartarian gloom which reigned around.

At a low-roofed square, the carriage stopped, two of the soldiers now approached, and while one opened the door, the other requested them to alight and follow him ; Pauline shrank back with uncontrouled terror, but Lady Aberdale taking her arm, entreated in a whisper her acquiescence, before the request was changed to a command.

By a long but easy ascent they were conducted to an apartment, the brilliant lights in which so suddenly succeeding to the sombre flame of a few widely scattered torches, made them close their aching eyes for some minutes. On openiug them, and finding that their attendant had quited the room, Lady Aberdale eagerly seized

the only opportunity they might perhaps ever have of speaking to each other in private, to conjure Pauline, by behaving with circumspection and fortitude, to avoid giving those into whose power they had unhappily fallen, an excuse for ill-treatment, which she would do by shewing unprovoked fears of receiving it. "Believe me," she continued with earnestness, "nothing throws around the unfortunate such security as a solemn dignity, which seems to doubt the possibility of insult. Let me then entreat you to smooth your brow, and take comfort in these proofs," opening as she spoke the brass net doors of a large book-case, "that we have not fallen into the power of absolute barbarians!" Pauline kissed the hand of her kind monitress, in token of submission to her precepts; and arm in arm they traversed the spacious apartment.

It exhibited the appearance of a superb tent, three large chandeliers suspended from its lofty dome, and filled with wax lights, illuminated every part of it with the splendor of a palace. The coved ceiling, as well as the rocky sides, were hidden by a loose hanging of light coloured cloth—stands of flowers divided the room into compartments—these, filled with a harpsichord, a pair of globes, books, &c., gave a polished character to the saloon, which, while it surprised the friends, inspired them with the hope that the heart of its owner would not prove devoid of pity and humanity.

After some time had been passed by them in fruitless conjectures, a delicate repast was served, at which Lady Aberdale, from policy, seated herself; and endeavoured by assuming the easy elegance which distinguished her manners at her own table, to conceal the

apprehension with which she was inspired by the ferocious countenances of their attendants. With equal resolution she sought to hide the fear that every new step which approached the apartment would present to her the being on whom their future fate depended. But no such intrusion added to the misery of the repast—it ended —the attendants withdrew; and from that time they experienced no interruption, till at an early hour a Bandit's wife entered to enquire if they were disposed to retire for the night. The ladies gladly assented to the proposal, anticipating the relief and comfort of a few hours of certain privacy, when Lady Aberdale learnt with a dread and disappointment which nearly overpowered that circumspection she had so strongly recommended to Pauline, that they were necessarily, to occupy not only separate, but dis-

tant cells. Cells indeed they literally found them; scooped out of the solid rock, and affording merely sufficient space to admit their creeping between the small niche in which the bed was buried, and the wall; while to add to the horrors of such a living tomb, there was no door to defend against the intrusion of any daring inhabitant of this savage abode.

Lady Aberdale pressed the hand of her despairing young friend, and directed her hopes to heaven, by raising her own eyes, as if imploring the protection of that unseen Being, from whom alone they could expect support. As she bent them again on Pauline with a look of newly inspired confidence, her alarmed charge instantly felt some degree of fortitude steal into her own bosom; and with a smile of resignation, she bade her protectress good night.

This fortitude, however, Pauline again lost when she felt herself left to the influence of her own sickly fancies; vainly did she court repose to "steep her senses in oblivion's balm," for of that sense of security which can alone give peaceful slumbers, she was wholly deprived by the exposed state of her grave-like dormitory. With every passing moment her fears gained strength, till at length no longer able to endure the conflict of reason against terror, she arose determined to brave the difficulties of exploring her way to Lady Aberdale's cell.

Happily her lamp, thoughon the wane, was still burning; and guided by the dubious light of its unsteady flame, she issued with a slow unequal step, from her dreary cell; sometimes checking her pace, to listen to some fancied noise; sometimes stopping that the unmoved lamp might enable her

eye to embody the ideal shadows seen in the distant gloom. Thus fearfully she glided along the dark, dread passages of this frightful abode. Yet in her progress did no grizly form "thro' night's disclosing shade," once cross her trembling steps, nor threatening sound strike on her listening ear. Eternal silence seemed here to mourn over the death of nature!

The effect of a stillness so appalling on the harrowed feelings of Pauline, urging her on with less caution and more speed, she became, through fear and impatience, bewildered amongst the endless turnings and windings which presented themselves to her choice. One frowning arch was so like another, one gaping vault so equally forbidding with the next, that instead of exploring her way to her friend, after wandering in hopeless terror during what appeared an age of

agony, she suddenly found herself in the spacious room in which they had supped.

One expiring candle, which glimmered faintly in its socket, just gave light sufficient to assist that she carried, in enabling her to recognise it to be the same they had occupied on their first arrival. But through an opening which was formed by the drawing up of a part of the hangings, she perceived a lamp burning on a table in a huge, cavernous apartment beyond ;—this she entered. It presented to her view its rocky sides in all their native roughness and sombre hue. A kind of wooden altar at the farthest part of the cavern, of as rude workmanship as that displayed by the architect, with some artificial trees, gave it the appearance of being dedicated to the worship of Woden, the god of the ancient Germans.

Notwithstanding the awful effect of this strangely decorated chamber, Pauline felt revived by finding herself in a part of the cavern with which she was comparatively acquainted, and which opened into a room that bore the emblems of a human habitation and civilised taste. Here, therefore, she resolved to await the return of day, instead of again adventuring into the dank, perplexing labyrinths, which had already nearly deprived her of her senses.

To detach her mind from thoughts she feared might destroy the little fortitude which an ardent appeal to heaven had given her; she directed her attention to a large book that lay on the table by which she was standing, and began to peruse its pages. In defiance of the shuddering horror which shook her soul, as the subject opened to her comprehension, she became so

wholly absorbed in the hopeless, the irremediable calamity it recorded, as entirely to lose all sense of her own forlorn and dangerous situation.—The book was entitled,

"RECORD OF THE CAVERN."

And the following impressive words, which soon caught her eye, arrested her every sense.

"Oh, conscience! who with thy serpent's sting inflicteth never-ceasing torments on my polluted soul! Well do the scowling looks and condemning eyes of my comrades second thy relentless bitterness! Let the torturing penance of this confession of my abhorred crimes, let the more torturing objects, which I have condemned myself to look on daily, allay the cruelty of thine ever-watchful eye, and turn the disgust and hatred of my associates into pity!

I leave this transcript of my black offences against God and man, as a warning to all who may hereafter join this band; and as the last act of that delegated power to me as chief, I ordain, that on this bloody scroll, and before the momento I have erected, those who now form, and those who may in future enter this community, do swear to observe the conditions I have inserted in the book of oaths, which by the direst imprecations, bind to obedience the brothers of this society.

CONFESSION.

On the 3d of August, 17—, the party then on the scout brought in as captives a young and lovely girl, with, as it was at first supposed, the valet of her noble father. This lady was the daughter of the Baron Gerstoff, and through the medium of a

relation, with whom she had resided from the death of her mother, she had obtained the consent of her father, to her marriage with the young and amiable Viscount Antoine Ulric de Vierich.

The Baron, wholly unacquainted with the personal beauty of his daughter, (with whom he parted when scarcely two years of age), and perfectly indifferent to mental qualities in any one, saw no other advantage in this match, than an early release from the payment of the annual stipend required for her board—for the Viscount was too generous or too proud to ask for what was not offered—a portion.

A short time before the intended nuptials were to have taken place, this young couple were invited to a concert, given in honour of an old Bavarian nobleman, then on a tour through the Tyrol. With hearts full

of love, joy, and hope, Antoine and Louisa repaired to the assembly. In the course of the evening, a pause in the amusement, as if with the tacit consent of the whole party took place, which tempted Antoine, in the pride of his soul, to prevail on Louisa to display her touching voice, accompanied only by her lyre, in an air of singular beauty. She reluctantly consented, at first shrinking from so public an exhibition of her talents, but at length she became animated by the enchanting melody of her song. Her lover, intoxicated by the admiration which was expressed in every eye at the peculiar grace and loveliness of Louisa, looked around with that triumphant delight, which a confidence of soon possessing this admired object might be supposed to create.

Ill-starred youth! where strayed thy guardian angel, that he warned thee

not of the fatal destiny thou wert unconsciously preparing for the innocent victim of thy vanity! Those youthful beauties, drawn into notice by the pardonable self-love of the unfortunate Antoine, and heightened by the flattering ardour of his looks, lighted a flame, which, ere possession blessed his arms, destroyed the happiness—the lives of both!

The Bavarian nobleman, fired by charms and graces, thus rendered conspicuous, solicited and obtained an immediate introduction; and finding the mind of Louisa de Gerstoff all he could have wished, hastened his departure for Munich to obtain that prize, through interest, he was well aware would be refused to love.

The Baron de Gerstoff, to whom he made his impatient application for the honour of his daughter's hand, delighted and dazzled with the liberal

offers which accompanied what might be styled a *demand* rather than a *solicitation*, instantly closed with the old Baron's proposal; and immediately after despatched an express, bearing his mandate, to Madame de Graun to break the engagement between Antoine and Louisa, and to prepare the latter for a speedy return to Munich, where he had secured an establishment more consonant to his wishes, and his daughter's reputed pretensions, than the one Madame de Graun had so inconsiderately led him to sanction.

The young lovers were thunderstruck at this arbitrary and cruel proceeding. After having formed a hundred plans in the vain hope of uniting contending duties, they, in despair, determined to set them all at defiance, by fleeing to some country where parental power could not reach them.

But ere they were enabled to put into execution this ardently-desired project, they were betrayed by the treacherous relation of Louisa to the Baron, who unexpectedly burst on his unfortunate daughter with all the fury of an enraged and disappointed madman. Finding him deaf alike to reason, honour, or affection, Louisa had only time, through a servant attached to her from her infancy, to convey to her lover the fatal blow, which struck at the very root of hope itself; and, after apprising him that her father was about to carry her back with him, she entreated that he would not present himself to that nobleman, that he might, by continuing unknown to him, find opportunities of again seeing her before she was, by a hateful marriage, separated from him for ever.

This advice suggested to De Veirich a scheme, which he seized the

first opportunity of adopting. It was under the disguise of humble habiliments, the offering himself to the Baron de Gerstoff in the place of a valet, whom he had suddenly discharged in anger. The lover effected this plan at the first stage at which they changed horses, and was accepted.

By this measure he secured, as he hoped, a station near his mistress, and opportunities of consulting with her on the means of escaping the misery to which the Baron had condemned them.

It was in the character of a domestic that the unfortunate Ulric de Vierick accompanied that unbending parent, who, in idea, was flying from him as the only obstacle to the accomplishment of his dearest wishes. But there were obstacles never to be removed—his wishes were never to be gratified! The father,—daughter,—

lover! all! were alike hurrying with fatal zeal, with intemperate impatience, to their final doom!

The father did not long survive a concussion of the brain, caused during his journey by the breaking down of his carriage; and the youthful lovers taken by a banditti in the act of humanely administering to his relief, met in this abode a fate, over which the most hardened of my comrades melted, as they were together laid in their early, their unhallowed grave!

The hour in which I first beheld Louisa made my heart her own—fear, sorrow, sickness, could not rob her of one charm! Sweet was her countenance, gentle her mind! She was made up of those mild virtues which led her to weep her wrongs, not to resent them—to look to heaven for protection, not to call down its vengeance!

My whole soul became devoted to her—I lived, I breathed, I felt virtue only in her presence—and my hourly study was to render this disgusting abode supportable to the beautiful idol I had concealed it in. Could I suppose that the tranquillity (rather should I say), the resignation, which succeeded the alarming effects of finding herself a prisoner in this cavern, proceeded from ought but the love-encouraging approbation of my fond endeavours to form in *myself her* happiness!

Thinking her cheek grew pale, and not daring to take her from the only place in which I could believe her mine, I made some mountain peasants, captured for the purpose, form a walk which opened upon the river, yet in a direction which precluded the possibility of my losing, through it, the treasure on which my life hung.

This walk, finding the trees I planted did not flourish, was by my care supplied by a constant succession of fresh shrubs of considerable height, and full of blossoms. I allowed her also the attendance of her father's servant, and welcomed with delight the fortunate idea of making one of the largest chambers of the cavern assume the appearance of a superb marquee.

Delusive hope led me on to believe that the serenity which reposed on her features owed its rise to approbation of my efforts to win her—generous, they might be called, for she was within my power; but I loved, I truly loved, and a timid delicacy ever accompanies a genuine passion in whatever bosom it takes root. Acting under its influence, it was long before I ventured to claim any marked return to my unbounded affection; when I did, she blushingly evaded giving the

encouraging confirmation of my hopes, for which I ardently panted.

Amongst the brave, though erring, fellows whom I commanded, it was a sacred law, that no one should ever make pretensions to the object of an honourable love, when once declared to be so. My acknowledged superiority over my companions, from my former rank in life (which my libertinism debased), made me fearless of a successful rival in any of my comrades. Still, however, I hastened to declare my honourable views, that I might enjoy the privacy which then became the right of the engaged parties; since, by the same law, the lady so affianced was never after expected to appear in the apartment common to the rest of the band.

Months thus rolled on, yet still Louisa withheld that blissful consent which I had rapturously expected to

receive. Colder and colder became her manners—I ought rather to say, more fearful, more shrinkingly sensitive, till at length I grew impatient of her continued reserve, and peremptorily demanded that return to my affection which I asserted was become my due. Silence was her only answer. From this time her countenance assumed a sadness, and her cheek a deathy paleness whenever I appeared —her eyes entirely lost their lustre, and at times she would hastily approach me, as if fraught with some important secret, which yet her beating heart forbade her to reveal. Oh, God! it was soon, too soon revealed! One fatal day, ere I quitted the cavern, I endeavoured to wrest from her the promise, that, on my return, which would be in two days, she would consent to become mine. Although her trembling limbs could scarcely sus-

tain her drooping frame, she mildly remonstrated with me on the cruelty of wishing to bury her in such an earthly purgatory, and making her the associate of its base inhabitants.

To obviate this objection, I sacredly swore, that on our marriage I would quit my disgraceful profession, that I would be all, every thing she would take the trouble of making me, and I again pressed upon her my entreaties. Gentle as she was in disposition, she was firm in principle, and would not give the promise she meant not to perform. I left her in anger, threatening to return with a friar, who would, at least, make our union lawful, make her *irrevocably* mine, if not by the bands of love, by the indissoluble bands of the church.

With this threat I departed, but I departed not alone; an unseen *fiend* accompanied me, and as I journeyed

on, conjured to his aid the worst of Demons—*Jealousey*—who, once admitted, a thousand imps followed in his train, and with wanton malice employed themselves in giving a form and colour to "airy nothings," which under the happy auspices of confidence had past unheeded, or appeared differently featured. These busy imps suggested to my apprehension the valet of the Baron de Gerstoff, no longer disguised under the habit of servitude, but shining forth in all the distinguishing graces of polished life. The light thus suddenly imparted to my mind, by shewing me Antoine as the equal of Louisa, changed the hue in which their manners to each other had hitherto appeared. The duteous attention of the servant now took the character of a lover's tenderness, while the grateful indulgence of a condescending mistress, assumed that of es-

teem, mutual confidence, love! Fired by these suggestions of my evil genius, I suddenly formed the resolution of surprising them by my unexpected return; I did return, and found them! —them! Antoine and Louisa, weeping in each others arms!

Terrific must have been my countenance, but in conscious innocence, they stood my furious gaze; boldly confessed their love, and would have made, through the story of their early attachment, an appeal to my justice—my humanity—I— but another hand has told the rest in colours horribly true! And nightly the yawning grave gives up their ghastly forms to haunt my thorny pillow. There, there they take their stand, and glaring on me! Oh God! the hour approaches; dread shades pursue me no more; spare, spare, my racked brain! Blast not my sight with the hideous spectacle of

that gory head! And you sweet victim, veil in eternal darkness the piercing anguish of that accusing look! Oh! torture not my ears by shrieking the woe-fraught names of Antoine and Louisa! Where, where can I seek refuge from the hateful vision of my soul-damning deed? See, see the injured pair—they burst through the cleaving rock—this way they turn their constant steps to blast——"

Here Pauline threw an enquiring look of horror towards the upper end of the cavern; and at the same time raising with a trembling hand the lamp to extend its rays, the light fell full upon a group, which fixed her in chill amazement—every sense became palsied—and for a moment her heart ceased to beat. Still on its recovering pulsation, though her convulsed nerves obliged her to rest the lamp awhile from her failing grasp, she attempted

not to flee. Spell-bound to the spot, she was wholly unable to resist that fascinating power which extraordinary objects, however terrific, acquire over a superstitious and romantic mind. Of this character was Pauline's. Conquering, therefore, in some degree, the first dreadful shock the sight occasioned her, she again ventured to lift the lamp. The scene which it then presented to her aching sight, was the figure of a man bound to a tree, from whose wounded side fast flowed the vital current; but a deep gash in his head, which had nearly cleft it in twain, testified that his assassin had considered the first wound as too mild a death to glut his fiend-like vengeance!

In full view of this soul-harrowing object, lay extended on the ground an elegant female, evidently dying the most excruciating of deaths; that in-

flicted by the agonizing pangs of pity —love—and horror !

Bending over her with savage triumph, was seen the gigantic perpetrator of this inhuman butchery !

From the contemplation of this appalling form, Pauline's eyes were irresistibly attracted to the more shocking victims of his cruelty. On these she fixed them; on these she gazed with such horror-struck intenseness, that from the hideous truth with which the master's hand had pourtrayed the bloody story ; she almost fancied she saw the gushing of the gory stream, that she beheld the quivering of the lacerated flesh, and heard the rending sigh from the no less lacerated heart of the expiring cause of this abhorred tragedy. A sigh, a deep, a long resounding sigh, she *did* hear ; not from an ideal being, but from the oppressed bosom of some living suf-

ferer ! and the one with which her own heart echoed it, threatened to silence it forever !——

At this moment of more than mortal suffering, Pauline would have given worlds, had she possessed them, that she had not quitted the comparative safety and comfort of her cell; yet she could neither summon sufficient strength or courage to dare the attempt of regaining it.

The heavy breathing of an unquiet spirit again caught her ear, and maddening at the expectation of seeing life give reality to the grizly forms before her, she started back with wild affright, and hastily turning to flee she knew not whither, beheld, stretched on a rude couch, within a recess unnoticed before, a breathing form of Herculean mould !

This then was the *living* sufferer; and from what cause a sufferer ? At

this question a near and personal danger opened upon the unfortunate Pauline, and banished those fear-created ones, with which she had hitherto been torturing herself. For while observing the sleeping Bandit, (he slept, though he reposed not) a suspicion more dreadful than all the terrors of the night, flashed upon her mind; it was, that in the awful being before her, she beheld the murderer!

His figure was formed on the same grand proportions which distinguished the savage exhibited in the dreadful picture. His dark locks fell back from his forehead in wild disorder; exposing the strongly marked arch of his closely knit brows. His large fine features appeared convulsed with all the agitation of one whose soul, was even in sleep, awake to the most poignant feelings! Beneath his closed eye-lids, his sightless orbs rolled in

painful and incessant restlessness, while, by the motion of his lips, he seemed to make earnest but vain attempts to tell the agonies of his perturbed mind!

Pauline, who imagined these to be remorseful symptoms of a conscience-wounded sleeper, was confirmed in the belief that he was the ruthless actor in the tragedy, whose representation had caused her such acute anguish; and fear for herself superceding the pity she had given to those whose sorrows were now buried with the "hours before the flood," her whole soul became intent on the means of escaping from this den of iniquity and death. But how effect this escape? She feared to move least the trepidation of her step should rouse the monster, the terror of whose awakening she firmly believed would be her instant death! Yet every moment of delay was pregnant with the danger

she apprehended. At length she nerved herself to the effort,—an effort indeed! Fearing even that the palpitation of her own bosom, and the noise of her light steps would betray her, she was in fancy threatened with all those impediments timidity fears, and of which fear creates the semblance.

She reached her cell, however, in safety; but it was not till she had been some time there, and had experienced a long interval of perfect silence, that she could divest herself of the idea that she was pursued by the tremendous being from whom she had fled.

Some hours after, when the bandit's wife, who attended them the night before, came with a taper to conduct her to the breakfast-room, Pauline found that a short uneasy slumber had done little towards lessening the irritability of nerves, which the events of

the night had caused. Yet, before she attempted to join Lady Aberdale, she reasoned herself into the generous resolution of concealing from her friend the discovery she had made, and the dreadful manner in which she had passed those hours she ought to have given to sleep.

That she had passed them wretchedly, her wan cheeks and sunken eyes sufficiently evinced. The observation alarmed the tenderness of Lady Aberdale; and though the general manners of Pauline, on joining her friend in the saloon (which was lighted up as at first, and the door that led to the scene of horrors, hidden by the hangings), could not divulge the degree of martyrdom she had endured, yet as it was ever present to her own mind, it caused through her whole frame such a tremor, gave to her eyes such an expression of fearful expectation, and-

such a wandering to her discourse, that Lady Aberdale began to suspect that her young friend's mind had failed beneath the severe trial it had unhappily been called upon to sustain. The anxious scrutiny this suspicion caused became hourly more keen, as she marked the increasing perturbation of the interesting girl's manners. While apparently listening to Lady Aberdale with attention, and when perfect quietness seemed to secure them from any new or immediate cause for alarm, the colour would forsake the cheeks and lips of Pauline, and give to her large dark eyes an expression of sickness and sorrow truly affecting. Then, as if conscious of betraying feelings she wished to conceal, she would spring from her chair, and pace the apartment with the haste of one desirous of fleeing from herself; a moment after checking her speed,

she would start back, as if recoiling from some object which inspired her with horror and disgust; then again seating herself, she would remain for minutes with her eyes immoveably fixed on one spot—that side of the tent which opened into the den of terror and remorse.

To all Lady Aberdale's tender enquiries, of how she had slept; whether she had been unwell in the night? and how she bore the dreary solitude of her cell? Pauline gave answers which tended rather to increase than to allay her afflicting fears, till the serious grief, which took possession of Lady Aberdale's countenance, recalled Pauline to a full sense of the ambiguity of her expressions, and the alarming singularity of her manners.

Convinced of the necessity of regaining some degree of self-possession, if she wished to save her friend from

suffering more severely in the belief that her intellects were affected, than she could experience in learning the sad events which proved them to be in the power of a deliberate murderer, she called religion and friendship to her aid. Pauline was thus acquiring some command over her emotions, and beginning to feel the benefit of this exertion, when she was wholly deprived of the power of sustaining it, by the entrance of the chief of banditti.

A noble figure, a stern countenance, softened at times by sadness, and lofty manners tempered by grace, were the characteristics which distinguished him.

As he advanced, after surveying Lady Aberdale, he cast an eager glance at Pauline, then suddenly stopping, he examined her with an impassioned hurried air. After a few mi-

nutes passed, on his part, in apparent irresolution, he again approached her, and perused her features with intense earnestness; his eyes then gradually losing, in an expression of deep melancholy, the ardour and impatience, which on his first appearance had given them a fearful wildness; he concealed them for some time with his hand, as if overcome by some strong but unexpectedly calamity. Presently recovering to a sense of propriety, he bent respectfully to both ladies, and, without breaking the awful silence which had prevailed, abruptly retired.

Pauline, who had in the person of this awe-inspiring being, recognised the sleeping murderer, and whose very terror, during the torturing scrutiny she had undergone, had acted as a stimulus in keeping her alive, now dropped senseless on the floor.

The various painful feelings which had for some time been struggling in the breast of Lady Aberdale, threatened at this sight wholly to conquer her fortitude and self command; and, as she bent in powerless solicitude over the object of her heartfelt concern, she almost doubted whether her restoration to life could be considered as a blessing; yet, as a blessing, her contradicting nature hailed its slow, its reluctant return to the sweet features of her favourite.

When recovered sense enabled Pauline to open her eyes, the wild enquiring look she threw around induced Lady Aberdale to enter with a soothing voice into the subject of her indisposition. She lamented that depression of spirits, which, by depriving her young charge of the power of exercising the quick perception which she naturally possessed, had prevented

her from perceiving the cheering hope to be derived from the manners of him who had lately visited them. She remarked, that, singular as they undoubtedly were, they evinced a sensibility wholly incompatible with cruelty.

Pauline, through whose veins at the recollection of the chief, a painful thrill ran cold and deadly, threw herself on the bosom of Lady Aberdale, who mistaking this action for one of aequiescence in her cause for hope, proceeded to give a picture of the chief's appearance, not omitting the expression of his countenance on his first entrance, and the change in that expression after he had contemplated the features of Pauline, which her calmer mind had enabled her to mark.

Pauline here raised her eyes to Lady Aberdale with a look so little corresponding with the impression that ami-

able friend had been labouring to make, that she added, with a degree of energy she was unaccustomed to exert—" Rouse yourself, my dear girl, from this shrinking of the soul, which by darkening your mental powers, adds ideal terrors to real dangers. If fortitude cannot restore us to liberty, its exertion will bring with it consolation, by strengthening our minds against the exaggerations of fear, and our hearts against the horrors of despair. Rest then in confidence on that Supreme Power, whose all-seeing eye and omnipotent arm can pierce the thickest shade, and reach the deepest dungeon! Remember, Pauline, that maxim of my countryman, with which you were at Rhonberg so much edified—He carries an assistant angel with him for his help, who begs a benediction from above."

Pauline, now kneeling beside her

friend, joined her in solemn prayer; and was so soothed by this pious address to heaven, that when, soon after, the dinner was brought in, and the chief of the banditti made his re-appearance, and took his place at the table, she was enabled to receive him with comparative composure.

To the surprise of both the ladies, he was followed by their own servants, who immediately stationed themselves behind their chairs.

No traces of perturbation were now visible in the features or manners of the chief: on the contrary, as soon as his captives had taken their seats, he entered into conversation with the ease of one entertaining voluntary guests, and with the deference due to rank and virtue.

His discourse, which evinced the well-educated gentleman; the refinement and politeness of his manners;

and the respectful attention of allowing her own servants to attend them, inspired Lady Aberdale with confidence and hope—feelings she endeavoured to communicate to Pauline, in a smile of encouragement: but it was answered by the shuddering girl, with a look so full of despair and abhorrence, that the chief, who had followed the direction of her ladyship's eyes, fixed his own fine, large, dark ones, with a marked and penetrating gaze upon her suffering young friend, who, unable to bear the searching power they to her fearful fancy appeared to possess, buried her face in her hands, dreading its betraying the knowledge she had unhappily acquired of his black offences.

A silence of some minutes prevailed, ere Lady Aberdale could conquer the distress and vexation this unguarded expression of disgust had caused her.

On the part of the chief also, whose thoughts were apparently engaged on the same subject, it remained unbroken. Yet of whatever nature they might have been, no expression of resentment escaped him; on the contrary, his softened voice, when Lady Aberdale renewed the conversation, which had been so awkardly interrupted, shewed that he was desirous of banishing the terror and detestation with which he had so evidently inspired her young friend. This conviction restored to her the semblance of comparative calmness; yet it was the semblance only, for by no efforts on her part could she, during his continuance with them, articulate one word.

When they had finished their desert, the chief expressed his regret that important business forced him reluctantly to quit them: adding, "Of music I am a passionate admirer; and the soft

modulated tones of a female voice, exercised either in reading or singing, afford me enchanting pleasure! I trust on my return, you will indulge me in these highly prized qualifications." Then rising he was about to depart, when Lady Aberdale, with some tripidation, requested the favor of a few minutes' attention, but he interrupted what she was going to add, by saying, "Time presses; pardon therefore my anticipating your request by one, which entreats that you will place in me the confidence I merit—confidence," he continued, "will insure safety."

With these words, most emphatically pronounced, he departed.

"The urbanity and respect," said Lady Aberdale, turning with much gravity towards Pauline, "The urbanity and respectful decorum of——

"Pardon me, my dear, my second

mother," exclaimed her young friend, wishing to deprecate the censure which she felt her apparently causeless excess of repugnance exhibited by her overpowered soul towards this extraordinary being, might with seeming justice draw upon her : " Believe me, I am not so uncharitable, so unjust as— I have great, sad, cruel cause——"

She stopped abruptly—The hesitation, the trembling confusion of Pauline (who felt all the horrors with which her secret was fraught, again rush with renewed force into her own bosom)as she was thus unguardedly on the point of divulging it, led the gentle Lady Aberdale to apprehend she had too severely *looked* her disapprobation of her uncontrouled and dangerous conduct at dinner; and wholly intent on dismissing from her mind the painful sense of having deserved reproof; she noticed not, that the words uttered

by Pauline imported more than a mere apology for an inadvertent display of her unconquerable horror against an avowed robber. Assuming therefore a voice and countenance congenial with the beneficent and conciliating nature of her feelings, she said, "Nothing could be farther from my intentions, my sweet girl, than to make a conduct, no otherwise censurable than from its being imprudently ingenuous, a subject of reproach. I merely wished to impart to your bosom a portion of that comfort mine has received, from our introduction to the Chief. To persuade you that the shades of sorrow which occasionally sadden his countenance, and soften his features, convince me goodness is not totally extinct in him; that he is still alive to the ennobling feelings of humanity, and may through them be wrought upon to restore us to freedom and

happiness. Yet this can only be hoped by evincing that confidence, of which his parting words prove him to be tenacious; a tenaciousness which shews that he is possessed of some remains of honour, however events may have induced him to wound it, by associating with a band of ruffians. We will then for the present rest upon the promise he has given us; and let us," she added, (taking down a book as she spoke) "try if we cannot find in this, lessons of fortitude, and subjects of comfort."

Pauline shook her head and sighed. "It is a duty," resumed Lady Aberdale, "we owe to ourselves and those we love, to seize every circumstance which may light up in our minds the flame of cheerfulness; and although those only who are devoid of sensibility, can expect that it will ever burn through life with undiminished bright-

ness, yet we ought to cherish it as a sacred fire, by the preservation of which many of its evils may be alleviated, if not overcome."

The book which her ladyship now began to read aloud, by a singular chance proved to be Gessner's "Death of Abel;" led on by the beauty of the work, she had arrived at the finely described remorse of Cain, after the murder of his brother, when again Pauline felt revive in their full force those emotions against which she had been endeavouring to fortify her mind. Thrown once more off her guard, she unconsciously exclaimed in the words of the murderer, "Spare, spare my racked brain!" Lady Aberdale, by laying down the book in much surprise, recalled Pauline's presence of mind, who, complaining of an intense pain in her head, entreated leave to retire to rest. Her friend immediately

accompánied her to her couch, near which she remained, till, from the respiration of her young charge, she was convinced she had sunk to sleep. She then quitted her to court that repose herself, of which she stood so greatly in need.

Exhausted nature had not long closed the weary eyes of Pauline in unquiet slumber, when she was suddenly and alarmingly awakened by the sound of her own name. She started, and rose fearfully from beneath the clothes, in which terrors, at the harrassing recollections associated with the incidents of the foregoing night, had buried her. On looking round, she beheld—great God!—she beheld, what to her appalled sense appeared the ghastly phantom of the murdered lover! A shroud-like habiliment concealed his gory side, but a bloody bandage bound together his mangled head. One

trembling hand scarcely sustained the lamp it bore, while with the other he sought to support his feeble frame against the niche which contained the agonized object of his visit.

"Pauline"—it sighed—"Pauline" with a failing voice it repeated, "beware of distrusting." At this moment of awful invocation, when a painful curiosity was roused to learn the warning it implied, the light was extinguished; a noise, as of some one struggling against superior force ensued, and was soon after succeeded by the stillness of death, which left Pauline in doubt whether the harrowing vision that had roused her from repose were a hideous dream, or a horrible reality. Whichever it might have been, the effects on her spirits were dreadful! Her mind gave way to frantic fancies, and in its delirium peopled the dark void, on which she fixed

her strained sight, with all the monstrous forms imagination ever "bodied forth" from a distempered brain. Even her ears became accessaries against her reason, and conveyed to her apprehension ideal sounds of dire distress—of torture—murder! Sometimes it was the short thick sob of one in anguish—Then the panting and agonized writhing of some overpowered victim of cruelty—Again it was the deep, hollow groan of death, or the shrill shriek of despair; till her frame no longer able to sustain the conflict with her highly-wrought mind, sank beneath its tortures, and Lady Aberdale found her in the morning, suffering all the burning pain of a violent fever.

This event overwhelmed her in an affliction so deep, that it was many hours, before even the voice of piety could recal to her memory that firm

reliance on Providence, which she had the day before so zealously endeavoured to inculcate in the mind of the poor sufferer. In her solicitude for Pauline, she ventured to request that cots might be carried into the saloon, under the arched entrance; to guard which, she also begged that one of her own servants might be stationed. Each of these wishes were granted; for escape was believed to be impossible, and cruelty was not intended. During this period the Chief of the Banditti had not re-appeared.

Three long days and nights, loaded with an oppressive weight of sorrow, did Lady Aberdale pass at the side of the unconscious invalid, ere her grieving heart was relieved by seeing her interesting charge slowly revive, like a flower smitten by the frosts of night, when it lifts its shrinking head to the first gleamings of the morning sun.

Pale—languid—dispirited, Pauline felt not the worth of the life restored, till gratitude had stamped on it a value.

Lady Aberdale now began to breathe again; and once more to look with some little cheerfulness to the future, which, Hope ever promises shall compensate for the evils of the present!—that smiling future, ever courting the unfortunate to the chase, but never overtaken!

Youth and an excellent constitution enabled Pauline so rapidly to conquer her remaining weakness, that in two days more she was strong enough to seek a little air and exercise in the long vaulted walk, formed by the excavation of the rock, as mentioned in the Bandit's confession. This walk terminated in an opening overlooking from a stupendous height the river Inn, and the country beyond; but the aperture was so immediately on the edge

of the precipice that it precluded the possibility of observing with safety the landscape on either side. The walk was of considerable extent, and its roof high and rugged, admitted light through loop-holes, perforated wherever the rock had not by its enormous thickness defied the strength of man.

The sides of this gloomy parade were ornamented (if memento's of withering nature can be considered as ornamental) with trees, whose scanty soil, and sun-less atmosphere, just kept up that sickly kind of vegetation, which gave them the effect of mourning in sympathy over the living death to which the captives were condemned. Mournful indeed must have been the fate of those, who could feel as a relief the liberty of breathing this ungenial air, and pacing the lengthening gloom of this cavernous walk.

As Lady Aberdale approached its

mouth, she found herself so unexpectedly on the dizzy verge which overhung the river, that becoming giddy at the first glance, she recoiled from it in dread; but Pauline advancing, remained awhile fixed in admiration of the solemn grandeur, and wild sublimity of the scenery.

The sun had just travelled behind the opposite mountain, forming for its bold gigantic promontories, a back ground of vivid light, finely contrasted by the sombre hue of its scowling front. Pauline watched with deep interest its progressive motion, and the varying tints shot by its beams across its towering summit. She was at length reluctantly obeying her friend's summons to return, when the desolate and profound repose which had hitherto reigned around, was broken by the faint sound of remote music. As it rose on the gale, she discovered it to

be the full, soft breathings of a clarionet, and its tones becoming more distinct and clear, her fluttering heart acknowledged an acquaintance with the air.

It was one she had first heard at Isenberg, and a thousand times had she repeated it with ever new delight, during her abode with Lady Aberdale. As its well known notes now smote on her attentive ear, it revived the memory of those happy scenes, never perhaps to be revisited!

In her anxiety to discover who was the musician, whose melody seemed to be the harbinger of peace and freedom, she approached still nearer the brink of the precipice. The affrighted Lady Aberdale, losing, in her alarm at Pauline's danger, all sense of personal fear, hastened forward with the intention of gently forcing her from her perilous situation; but ere she could

reach the fatal spot, Pauline had suddenly lost her balance, and in the next moment was precipitated into the dark horrors of some rocky chasm which yawned beneath. A piercing—a deadly scream, shot its petrifying terrors through the heart of Lady Aberdale, as it spoke an agonizing consciousness in the poor victim, of her direful fate!

With clasped hands and raised eyes, unmindful of the passing time, she long stood the despairing arraigner of heaven's justice; till the dissonant sound of a signal horn, roused her to other feelings, and rushing through the vaulted walk, regardless now of all those considerations which had hitherto confined them to the prison chambers allotted to her and the lost Pauline, she stopped not, till she found herself in the midst of a group of beings, who instantly closed around

her with terrific aspects, and thundering questions.

The dim vapour with which their pipes had filled the half-lighted cavern they occupied, by clothing them in a deceptive mist, threw over their dark forms a pale and dreadful hue, which left their size and numbers to the calculation of her bewildered mind; and for a few minutes, she believed herself suddenly transported "to the deep horrors of the Stygian state". The effect this illusion produced, was, the banishing for a short time all power of claiming the assistance of which she came in quest; but her feelings were soon drawn back to their original object, by the sudden appearance of their Chief, towering above the heads of the encircling Banditti. With an anxiously enquiring eye, he impatiently broke through them, as Lady Aberdale at the same moment advanced and threw herself at his feet;

but she was wholly unequal to the articulating the entreaty which swelled her bosom.

Respectfully raising her, the Chieftain of the Band conducted her in silence to the Marquee apartment, where, after she had so far conquered her emotions as to make him comprehend the sad catastrophe which had befallen her unfortunate friend, she expressed the romantic wish of having her beloved remains sought for; and being herself allowed the melancholy privilege of attending them to Isenberg..

Deep grief softened every manly feature of the Chief, as he listened to the opening of the subject; but when with rising pathos, Lady Aberdale proceeded in her agitated recital, the oft-recurring expressions of lost Paulina—ill-fated Pauline seemed suddenly to move some spring in the bosom

of the Bandit; which gave to his eyes the same wild character of impassioned ardor and perturbation, which had marked his first introduction of himself to his captives.

"Pauline?"—demanded he at length, with impetuous eagerness—"said you not, Pauline has visited this cavern?—Oh Lady!" he continued apparently losing his ferocity in the tender recollections which crowded on his mind, and made reason wander from the purport of Lady Aberdale's discourse—"Oh Lady! know you not that her of whom you speak, *is mine by every tie human and divine? Two years since, these arms received her a beauteous bride; never had the varying seasons of the year beheld a union so enchanting; but as the spirit seen in a dream, vanishes from our opening eyes, so fled the sun-beam of my days!*"

He paused—in that pause, his passions appeared again to take fire; and recurring to the fate of Pauline, he exclaimed in a voice of thunder, "And when the omnipotent, in relenting pity led her here in search of me; did you —did you, with demoniac malice basely hurl her from the dreadful steep, to blast the promised blessing. But I will fathom the depths of the vast ocean, scale the high vaults of heaven, penetrate to the center of the great globe itself; and in defiance of both men and gods, she shall be mine again,—mine for ever!"

Saying this, he sprang furiously towards the arched passage and disappeared.

Lady Aberdale, who had every instant expected she should become the victim of his misconception, was no sooner convinced that he was beyond her hearing, than she sank upon the

sofa, exhausted in strength and spirits, and found a short respite from her sufferings in their numbing excess. As this torpidity gave way before the reviving keenness of her feelings, she exclaimed, " Merciful Heaven---the Maniac ! the same terrific Maniac, from whom the mother of my darling Pauline was rescued by the Baron Isenberg ! Great God, thy will be done !"

Some hours of painful meditation had succeeded this attempt at fortifying her mind against murmuring at a dispensation, which had perhaps rescued the unfortunate Pauline from the savage power of a Maniac, and a ruffian, when she saw enter a venerable old man !

White were his locks, his demeanor respectable ; and his open countenance, on which age had marked fidelity and honest worth, seemed to for-

bid the belief that he was a willing associate of a band of robbers.

Approaching Lady Aberdale with great respect, he informed her that he came to apologize in behalf of his unfortunate lord, for the effects of a dreadful malady, which had been originally brought on by miseries unparalelled. "But let me first hasten to inform you," pursued he, "that one of the disguised guards, regularly stationed on the hills surrounding this subterranean abode, has brought information, that at sun-set, a boat was discovered rowing past their heights by two men, in which was also a young lady, whom the brotherhood suspect to be your friend. In consequence of this idea, in my lord's illness, I have ordered out scouts to trace them, and endeavour to ascertain, if she has in reality been thus miraculously preserved.

The possibility that by means of the boat, the life of Pauline had been actually saved, re-kindled a hope in the bosom of Lady Aberdale, which restored to her sufficient calmness to listen to the conversation, the old man was evidently desirous of introducing.

From him she learnt, that his extraordinary lord, the Chief of the Banditti, was indeed the same unfortunate Vicompte de Valdore, whose insanity had formerly led him to believe Gertrude D'Aubry to be his wife, and in alarming her, had fixed her fate, by throwing her upon the protection of the Baron Isenberg.

He had several times since that period escaped from confinement, but had been as often retaken. At length his faithful steward, dismissed from the superintendance of his estates by the present possessor, began to suspect,

that, even though restored to sanity, his lord would never more regain the enjoyment of liberty or property. Determined by this belief, to ascertain from the evidence of his own senses, if the ill-fated Vicompte, was really in a state of mind likely to injure either himself or others, should he be restored to that first of blessings, freedom! he discovered means to gain access to him. Dumesnil found his lord, with a temperate pulse, a calm countenance, mild in manners, and consistent in discourse; he now believed it became his duty to give him that assistance in effecting his escape, which he doubted not would lead to his re-establishment in his hereditary rights.

After succeeding in this preliminary object, he accompanied the Vicompte to a secret retreat he had previously secured, where he watched over him

till he was fully satisfied, that he was perfectly recovered from his malady.

The good old man now set out to try amongst the circle of the Vicompte's connections, if he could not find hearts as honest and as generous as his own, who would exert their interest and power for the purpose of getting him restored to that place in society, to which he was born.

But his applications all ended in disappointment. One was gaily dancing through the paths of dissipation, and revolted at the idea of turning from these captivating scenes, to those sad ones which surround the unfortunate; indifference, guarded with a frozen shield the bosom of a second; while interest contracted to one selfish centre all the feelings of a third. On one point alone all more perfectly agreed; it was that of positively declining to interpose in an affair, which must ne-

cessarily embroil them with the next heir.

The afflicted Dumesnil, concealed not on joining his Lord, the applications he had been making, nor their fruitless result; but contrary to his expectations, the Vicompte de Valdore received them without any outward signs of anger yet, that he poignantly felt the injustice under which he seemed doomed to suffer, his after conduct proved. Dumesnil was of opinion, that his keen sense of it, by degrees again unsettled his reason.

The day after the return of his faithful domestic, the unfortunate Vicompte followed by this, his only friend, quitted the environs of Paris in disguise, an assumed calmness concealing the secret rage which agitated his bosom.

He led the way through France on foot, and then extended his wanderings

to the Tyrol. It was during their progress through that province, that they fell into the toils of Banditti, and were conveyed by them to the cavern in which Pauline had so lately suffered such agonizing terrors.

Though the bloody deed she had there seen recorded, was not, as her apprehensions very naturally led her to suspect, performed by the present Chief, but one who had some time before paid the debt of nature.

The Vicompte de Valdore on reaching this subterranean abode, had given the first instance of insanity which Dumesnil had observed, since his liberation. On being led into the midst of the band of ruffians, into whose power ill-fate had cast them; what was the surprise and grief of the good old man, to hear his lord greet them with perfect cordiality, and in the next minute, offer to become himself a voluntary member of their fraternity!

Struck with horror, as was Dumesnil by this proposition, he could not be insensible to the spontaneous homage, paid to the manners and address of the ill-starred Vicompte, by those who held him in their thraldom.

That nobleman passionately related to them the wrongs under which he had suffered; and to his energetic tale they listened with such mute attention, as testified they had for awhile forgotten the purpose for which they had all assembled! It was that of chusing a new Chief to succeed him who had not long expired.

As the Vicompte de Valdore proceeded in addressing to them the story of his injuries, his high rank, the grandeur and nobility of his figure, the imposing superiority of his mind, the wild and evanescent fire which flashed from his eyes, and the almost supernatural energy given to his language

by his unsettled intellects; all these united causes were conceived by the Banditti, to be evident proofs that he possessed those savage qualities, which pointed him out as a being formed by his pre-eminence, to be the Commander of their society. This feeling powerfully operating on their characters, by creating at once awe and enthusiasm, they with one voice hailed him, not as their brother, but as their Chief!

It was in vain that Dumesnil, with tears and prayers, urged all that an upright mind could suggest, to induce his relinquishing a command so degrading; an association so criminal. The heart of Valdore was steeled to every argument against a plan, which ensured the indulgence of his revenge. He however offered to send back to his native country his honest adviser, with the means to exist in it with

comfort; but this affectionate domestic refused to forsake him, alledging, that whatever his master's fate might prove, he was resolved to share it with him.

The first act of Valdore's Chieftainship was, that of leading his troop into Alsace, where he levied heavy contributions on the estate unjustly wrested from him. He had since made many similar incursions, but all at periods when circumstances promised a favourable issue; and a part of his hereditary property, as well as that forced from the favorites of fortune, was instantly distributed amongst the poor.

Amidst these exercises, the mind of Valdore for a considerable time found sufficient occupation to divert it from that one which never recurred without bringing in its train those visionary hopes of recovering his lost wife, which had first unsettled his reason.

Those hours which were not passed in the toils and dangers of his profession, he beguiled amidst the books with which he had furnished his subterranean recess; while his courage, his strength, and the impetuosity of his mind, gave him the most unlimited empire over those whom he commanded.

A considerable time had thus passed away, when his half-closed wounds were again torn open, by the perusal of the "*Record of the Cavern,*" which had till then been secreted from him by the Band, under the idea, that they should be injured in his esteem by the knowledge, that an act of such atrocity had been committed by their former Commander. Accident at length threw it in his way, and as he made himself master of its contents, he fancied he discovered a similarity in his own early sorrows, and those of

the lovers, whose wretched fates it recorded.

The remembrance of those sorrows once recalled to his heart, soon gave birth to new, but vain projects, to recover her, whom the grave had long since enclosed. He issued strict orders to his comrades to stop every female who fell within their power, and bring her to the cavern in the fallacious hope that he might discover, by these means, her, who was no longer an inhabitant of earth.

The awe and veneration in which Valdore was held by his followers, made them unhesitatingly obey his mandate; and it was in compliance with this command, that Lady Aberdale and Pauline had been stopped, and conducted, as we have already seen, within the precincts of this dreary abode

As an aweful check on the con-

duct of those to whom he was necessitated to entrust the females whom he empowered them to seize; he caused the horrid painting which had so greatly appalled Pauline, to be replaced in the rude chamber from whence it had been removed; and obliged every Bandit to swear, in presence of this terrible memento, to respect all those who should be, in obedience to his command, conducted thither.

Valdore had been absent at the time Lady Aberdale and Pauline were brought into the cavern, nor did he return till after they had been for some time retired to their cells. These wretched chambers, a great number of which had been excavated for the use of the Banditti, were the only accommodation for sleeping, which this subterraneous abode afforded; it was consequently from necessity, not

any intention of inflicting cruelty on them, that they had been assigned as their place of rest.

The fatigue of a long day's journey, had buried the Chief in slumber on the bench whereon he had thrown himself in the inner apartment, soon after his regaining the cavern. It was there the wandering Pauline had seen him, and mistaken the perturbed sleep of an unsettled mind, for symptoms of dire remorse.

His examination of his fair captives on the following day, had dispelled the hope with which he went to visit them; yet the first disappointment passed, he resolved on seeking a second interview, in which he intended to apologize for the violence which had been offered them, in bringing them to the cavern.

That interview had afforded him in the elegant mind and manners of Lady

Aberdale, and the interesting beauty of Pauline, a pleasure so long untasted, that as affairs of great consequence to the fraternity called him from them at a moment when he was becoming more alive to their fascination, he resolved to postpone, till after his return, the explanation he was about to give, and their liberation, which was to follow. Had he been aware of the terrible consequences his concealment would produce on the young creature who was within his power, Valdore would not have persisted in the selfish cruelty which, by leaving her in suspense, gave a loose to the terrors which had nearly destroyed her.

Those under whose charge the captive friends were left, he strictly enjoined to obey their every wish, save that of freeing them, an injunction which was faithfully fulfilled.

In the mean time, the excessive ex-

ercise Valdore had taken during the five days he remained absent, tended to encrease the fever which had for some time lurked in his blood, and threatened to terminate in one of his former fits of wild insanity.

Thus circumstanced the name of Pauline coupled with the dreadful accident which had befallen her, as related to him on his return, in the disjointed language of distress by Lady Aberdale, touching that spring which had so often roused to madness, at once brought on the terrific paroxysm, to which she had nearly become a victim.

The faithful sharer in his fortunes, after administering to him the medicine which generally had been found to calm him, had left the Vicompte under the care of some of the most approved of the Band, while he came to inform Lady Aberdale, of the intelligence respecting her young friend, so calculated to console her.

Dumesnil was still speaking, when those whom he had despatched to trace the lady in the boat, returned with the confirmation that it was Pauline, and that she had been placed by the persons who saved her from the water, in the convent of Augustines at Inspruck. With the earnest entreaties of Lady Aberdale to be allowed immediately to join her, the steward complied, decidedly taking on himself the responsibility to his lord respecting her on his recovery.

As the pious lady, after submitting to the precautions under which she was carried to the cavern, found herself once more safely conducted back to the road on which they were first stopped, she lifted her heart in gratitude to heaven for an event to which, though it had for a time overwhelmed her in despair, she now attributed their wonderful extrication from dangers so

fearful; since the growing pleasure the Chief had acknowledged to Dumesnil he began to taste in their presence, would probably each day have diminished his resolution to restore them to liberty, had not the accident of Pauline at once placed her beyond his power, and by hastening the crisis of the Vicompte's malady, enabled the steward to fulfil his own benevolent wish, of allowing her to depart from a place so dreadful.

Lady Aberdale had found Pauline in the convent as described, but lost to all consciousness of existence. The presence of her friend recalled her wandering senses, and as soon as she had recovered sufficient strength, she was conducted back by her to Rhonburg.

This extraordinary adventure soon reached the knowledge of the police, and orders were issued to a party of

military, immediately to march in search of the depredators. The road to their subterraneous abode was in the end traced, and possession taken of the cavern; but it was found to be entirely deserted! Scarcely any vestige being left that it had ever been inhabited. The banditti, warned of their danger, had precipitately quitted it with their Chief, and reached in safety the forests of Bohemia.

By the orders of Government, however, to prevent the Cave's again becoming the receptacle of similar outlaws, its mouth was choaked up, and posts and citadels at the entrance of all the passes were built, which, by commanding the surrounding avenues and valleys, guarded the road from all future danger.

When Lady Aberdale had concluded the relation of all the particulars

with which she herself was acquainted respecting this strange adventure, Sir Launcelot, who had attended to it with the deepest interest, remained for some minutes after she had done speaking, profoundly silent. He then abruptly asked her to whom she had attributed the attempt which it appeared had been made to rescue herself and Pauline, soon after they were first seized by the banditti?

Her Ladyship replied, that although from the sentences which had reached them from those who had called on the robbers to stop, she had reason to believe that an effort had been made to release them, as it had failed, she had lost the opportunity of ascertaining to whom they owed so great an obligation. She added, that since their liberation, she had made various enquiries, but they had none of them been followed by the satisfaction she sought.

After some further consideration, Sir Launcelot interrogated her respecting those who had saved Pauline from the river, into which she had fallen from the aperture of the cavern. But on this subject Lady Aberdale was equally incapable of informing him. Her young friend had been taken into the boat in a state of insensibility, and as the persons who conducted her to the convent had never appeared at it after her ladyship had joined her there, she had naturally concluded they must have been strangers, who, in their travels through that part of the Tyrol, had providentially passed the spot at the very moment of Pauline's accident, and having once placed her in safety, and ascertained her recovery from the first effects of the water, had proceeded on their journey, without taking any further interest respecting her.

Sir Launcelot had still much more to ask, when a stop, was for the present, put to this conversation, by the return of the party; all of whom, except the late subject of their discourse, and her mother, appeared gay and happy; and as greatly pleased with the amusements of this, as they had been with those of the preceding day.

The next morning they set out from Augsburg on their progress towards home, and in the various and interesting objects which presented themselves to their observation, several of the company found much to amuse and delight them.

CHAP. III.

THESE days, and many succeeding ones, during which they had returned by easy stages to Isenberg, presented the Marquis with a thousand opportunities of drawing still closer the tie of sympathy, which existed between him and the object of his affection:—a tie, which Viola had learnt was fully sanctioned by the approbation of her parents.

It was with a delight, which for a time banished the remembrance of their approaching separation, that Villerose marked her late timidity towards himself, gradually yield to a sweet confidence, which frequently betrayed her into unconsciously dis-

covering to his ever watchful observation, some unexpected and still more attractive charm.

A light-heartedness, which sprang from an internal, though undefined sense of happiness, from this period lighted up her interesting features with a new character of expression, which, in the eyes of her lover, who discovered in the source to which he traced that expression, a confirmation of his dearest hopes, afforded a perpetual theme of pleasure.

At times, giving way to the innocent gaiety which animated her, Viola became towards the Marquis, playful, sportive. In such moments he remarked in her, with equal surprise and delight, the same graceful witcheries which had at first so powerfully allured him in Carenthéa; but in her sister it was rendered tenfold fascinating to his heart, by the sensibility and

sensitiveness of nature, which ever tempered her unoffending sallies—sallies that received additional zest, by the contrast they offered to her generally retiring manners.

Meanwhile, Don Alphonso had solicited permission of his noble hosts, to make known his love to the object that had inspired it; which permission obtained, Carenthéa enjoyed the gratification of listening to that explicit declaration of his passion, which she had so long impatiently expected.

During the scene which followed, the mingled sensations of pleasure, exultation and embarrassment, which were visible in her countenance and manners, appeared in the eyes of her enamoured lover unequivocal tokens of that decided preference, the avowal of which, he with difficulty drew from her reluctant lips.

De Lerma did not deceive himself,

in believing that Carenthéa preferred him to every other being; but he was yet to learn, that she was herself governed by a ruling passion, which possessed over her such potent sway, that when its indulgence was placed in competition with *his* tranquility; it was—Alas, poor Don Alphonso!

The first moments of his fancied security, however, were not those in which he was likely to make this discovery; but it was not long before she taught him sensibly to feel, that the mutual promise they had exchanged, was far from bringing that peace to his bosom he had fondly hoped; on the contrary, while it but the more confirmed her empire over him, she appeared to think it a sanction for her relaxing from that discretion, which she had hitherto exercised towards him.

The Baron, in giving his consent to

Don Alphonso's addressing his second daughter, had qualified that consent by insisting, as he had done with Villerose, that each party should for the present, reserve the right of declining to solemnize their union, supposing a more perfect developement of each others characters, gave either reason to believe it was not calculated to promote their happiness.

De Lerma, however, perfectly convinced that death alone could extinguish the passion with which Carenthéa had inspired him, had so frequently, and so vehemently sworn this to his delighted mistress, that she no longer entertained a doubt of its truth.

Perhaps it was to render this conviction as clear in the mind of *others*, as in her *own*, that she now began to make it her favorite pastime to put

the strength of his affection to perpetual, and some very cruel proofs.

Sometimes, after promising him her company in a ride or a walk, or her attention to the perusal of a poem, or some occupation he was desirous of her participating with him: at the very moment he thought her on the point of fulfilling her agreement, she would sieze some frivolous pretence to quit him, and not re-appear till the hour was passed, for enjoying his anticipated pleasure.

But how did Carenthéa employ the time of her absence from a lover, the theme of whose converse was so agreeable to her?

Often, in reflecting with triumph on the pain, disappointment, and anxiety, under which that lover was smarting; his ill concealment of which must render evident to every one, how impossible he found it to be happy

without her. There were other occasions, on which she amused herself, in watching from behind a curtain, (that concealed her from him, in some apartment to which he had not access) his anxious looks, frequently thrown up at the windows of the chateau in search of her; as he paced with restless impatience the terrace beneath, while still unwilling to relinquish the hope of her fulfilling her word to him that morning. Sometimes she found sufficient subject for merriment in listening to his footsteps; when, ashamed to betray his fretful humour, at her slight of him to their assembled friends; he retired to the library, and there, amidst his books, vainly sought to recover that tranquility of mind, with which he had been wont to study their instructive pages. Then it was that the echo of his steps, as he repeatedly returned to the party, in the hope

of finding her amongst them, and slowly measured back his way on discovering her not, were music to her ear; for they appeared evidences of her encreased importance with one, whom it was her glory so entirely to have subdued.

De Lerma was not however always disposed to bear with unqualified submission to her caprices, these little instances of want of consideration and tenderness in his mistress. He at first supplicated, remonstrated, and finally resented them. This opened a new source of pleasure to Carenthéa, and a still greater *cause* of triumph in the ease with which, by her playful *agaceries*, she could, when he was even most seriously offended, lure him back to her feet.

Happily for Don Alphonso, no particular jealousy mingled itself in his frequently irritated feelings. The

Chevalier had taken leave of the family the day after their return to Isenberg; and Sir Launcelot, who had conceived a prejudice against Carenthéa, behaved towards her, with barely the civility due from any gentleman to one of her sex.

He had therefore, no immediate fear of a rival, though his mind was kept in a constant state of anxiety;—sometimes persuaded he possessed her entire affection, and almost hating himself for ever having given way to anger, at those thoughtless frolics which originated in the gaiety of her spirits, and which often possessed for him such charms. At others, trembling at the apprehension that he had never touched the heart of her, without whom, every day but the more convinced him he could never again taste happiness.

The state of fluctuation, in which

his mind was now perpetually kept, was rendered still more painful, by perceiving that all the respect and deference, with which in the early stage of his partiality, Carenthèa had uniformly treated his opinions, his national prejudices, and his little peculiarities, had, by degrees, given place to the same poignant raillery, which she had at that very time, so mercilessly indulged towards others. Now even the unguarded proofs of his affection which accidentally escaped him, were not unfrequently chosen by her as fit subjects of ridicule; and while these instances depressed and lowered Don Alphonso in his own opinion, they made him daily feel less confident of those claims which he once flattered himself, he indisputably possessed to her regard.

But whilst Carenthèa thus took a cruel pleasure in tormenting her lover,

and making him pay for occasional hours of happy confidence, by days of doubt and restless anxiety, far different was the situation of Villerose.

In the Mistress he had chosen, he observed endless attaching traits of character, which offered him additional reason to congratulate himself on the felicity of his destiny.

When together, the sympathy of taste which directed their amusement, the novel and fascinating charm which a consciousness of that sympathy diffused over their occupation, the deeply felt, and delicious sense of happiness with which the bosom of each was filled, from the certainty that it was shared by the other, left them, while thus engaged, scarcely a hope, a wish, but that it might be lasting as it was precious.

Thus "attuned to happy unison of soul," it is not wonderful that

time, which so sweetly passed, should roll unheeded on; nor that the summer and a considerable part of the autumn had departed, leaving the Marquis, still lingering at Isenberg, and wanting resolution to fix the period of his departure from a being, to whom he was attached with an enthusiasm little short of idolatry.

As the Baron had signified his positive determination not to suffer either of the projected unions to take place till Viola had attained her next birthday, Villerose, who knew that event would not arrive till the following spring, wanted the stimulus of feeling, that by expediting his journey, he could hasten the moment of his promised bliss; and he now rather sought to forget the necessity of undertaking it at all, than to prepare his mind for their temporary separation.

From the dream of pleasure, how-

ever, in which he had been indulging, he was at length roused by letters, convincing him of the propriety of his speedily setting out.

He communicated their contents to the Baroness, and with a heavy heart, yielded to her persuasions, to name a day in the ensuing week, for beginning his journey.

Viola shared with him in the fond regret he expressed to her, when alone, at their approaching separation; and never had she appeared in a light so captivating to her lover, as while seeking to reconcile him to that event; for her every look, her every accent, while endeavouring by an exertion of her own fortitude to animate his, were tempered with a tenderness, which guarded him from experiencing a single jealous pang of apprehension, least her superior self-controul sprang from a want of thoroughly sympa-

thizing in the emotions which filled his own bosom

"I know not how it is, my Viola," said the Marquis, after he had for some time been mournfully contemplating her sweet countenance—"but your words possess not now their wonted power over me! I cannot shake off the gloomy sensations which ever assail me, when I anticipate this solitary journey; for in leaving Isenberg, I quit all to whom I am attached in life. Whither I am going I have no parental ties, no kindred, no kind friend to whom I shall be welcome. In my mother, I lost the only relative who ever loved me. An unhappy and deeply rooted animosity long existed between her and her only brother, Count Altenberg of Saxony, whom she irreconcileably offended by her marriage with my father; from which circumstance, I have never seen him."

"Surely," said Viola, "his anger towards his sister cannot extend to you?"

"So I once hoped," replied the Marquis, "but experience has since taught me how groundlessly. Some months after my mother's death, passing through Dresden, in which city my uncle then resided, I solicited his permision to visit him, and was haughtily refused. I have since had the double mortification of discovering, that his only son inherits towards me, all the prejudices of his father. About a year ago I happened, at a party given by the Prince of Verona, to be placed at table next to a young man, with whom I soon fell into familiar, and pleasing conversation. It was my cousin: but we discovered not for some time our affinity. From the moment we did so, a cold reserve usurped the place of that affability of manner,

which had before distinguished him. He took an early opportunity to leave the company, and the next morning without again seeing me, quitted a place in which I had heard him say, it was his intention to pass some weeks."

"And do you imagine he in this instance, acted from the impulse of his own inclination," asked Viola, "or in obedience of that of his father?"

"I know not," replied Villerose, "my mother has often told me, she attributed the continued inveteracy of my uncle's enmity to the offence he conceived at the will of my maternal grandfather; who, in his absence, relenting from the displeasure he had in common with her brother conceived at her elopement with my father, entailed his estates on her eldest son, supposing his own left behind him no male issue. That, however, is a circumstance so little likely to happen,

that but for your question, it would scarcely have recurred to my memory."

"And have you no paternal relations?" asked Viola, in a voice expressive of the solicitude she felt for him.

"None, whom I have ever seen," replied the Marquis. "In consequence of my having been so early removed from my native country, I may truly say I feel myself equally an alien to it, and those branches of my family who still survive, with not one of whom did my mother keep up any intercourse. Indeed she once hinted to me, that she owed the unconquerable disgust she had conceived for France, and her determination never to reside in it, to some cruel persecution she had suffered from them, soon after the decease of my father. You suspected not, my Viola," added he

tenderly, after a short pause, "on how very unconnected a being you had conferred your inestimable preference!"

"Villerose,"—said she, extending towards him her hand with much emotion, "I scarcely believed you could have added any new claim to those you before possessed on my affection; but you have from this moment doubled them."

"Yet I must leave you," exclaimed the Marquis, passionately pressing it to his lips and heart—"must quit you, perhaps never to return! Oh! Viola!" added he more calmly, "dare I rely on the promised felicity of calling you wholly mine?—of uniting myself, through you, to your inestimable family, by a tie, which will give me a real claim to the consideration with which they honour me? Of insuring the interest and paternal

advice of the excellent Baron, of your mother, of the kind-hearted Lady Marguerite! Of adding to that friendship which I have ever so highly prized of my Sigismond, his fraternal regard; that of Pauline, of Carenthéa, of Isidore! Good God! to what a family of love will you attach me! and by a band how precious!"

"My friend," said his lovely companion, in a voice scarcely audible, "on the accomplishment of this dear hope, equally depends the future happiness of her you love."

The grateful acknowledgements which the now elated Villerose was pouring forth, for an avowal as explicit, as it was enchanting to him, were interrupted by the entrance of the Baroness, who came to apprise him of an arrangement, which for the present, completely dissipated all his remaining regret at his projected journey.

It had been proposed to the Baron, by the Lady Marguerite, and seconded by herself, that the whole party (the venerable lady excepted) should accompany the Marquis as far as Liancour, his nearest estate, situated on the borders of Alsace. There, after passing a few days with him, it was her ladyship's plan for them to leave Villerose to the arrangement of his affairs, and the visiting his other domains, while they, by a different route, should proceed to Rhonberg, where they had for some time been engaged to pass their Christmas with Lady Aberdale.

The idea of this excursion had been first suggested to the Lady Marguerite, by a conversation she had lately had with the Baron and Madame Isenberg, on the visible decline of Pauline's health and spirits, who it was now evident to every one, had since their last return, laboured under

some indisposition, or mental uneasiness, which threatened, if not removed, to destroy her constitution.

To the earnest and repeated questions of her friends, she persisted in replying that she was quite well, and endeavoured, by assuming an air of cheerfulness to dispel their fears, though there were times, when she answered the solicitous anxiety of her mother only by sighs and tears, which confirmed the Baroness in the apprehension that she had some hidden source of grief which she feared to avow.

It was in vain that Madame had bewildered herself in a labyrinth of conjectures as to the cause; but they had often led her nearer the truth, than she would permit herself to believe.

Such was the posture of the matter, when Lady Marguerite proposed the

excursion before mentioned, alleging, that it would be productive of equal benefit to Pauline and her mother, (who had greatly suffered from uneasiness on her account) by affording them change of air and scene; advantages from which the Baroness never failed to derive benefit.

In urging this plan, the Lady Marguerite had been completely successful, and to the inexpressible joy of the Marquis, on the appointed day, he found himself, on quitting Isenberg, accompanied by all those friends who had so infinitely endeared it to him.

CHAP. IV.

THE journey to Liancour was performed under different auspices from that they had some months before together taken. The gay profusion of luxuriant summer, had given place to the season of decay. The sun, which then shone on them with animating warmth, had now lost its vital lustre. The flowers had resigned their variegated robes, and disappeared. Birds, cheerless and despondent, sat shivering on the leafless boughs, whose late umbrageous foliage, now brown and withered, strewed the humid road.

The weather, which had been remarkably favorable on their first setting out, considering the near ad-

vance of winter, became cold and comfortless, as they approached the ancient castle of the Marquis; who in spite of every effort to keep up the elation of spirits with which he had commenced his journey, found them daily sinking into a state of the most painful depression, as he drew nearer its close.

, Indulging, instead of endeavouring to drive from him the superstitious repugnance with which he had ever considered his separation from Viola; Villerose was persuaded, his knowing, that in approaching Liancour, he drew nearer to that so long dreaded moment, occasioned the otherwise unaccountable sickness of heart, which oppressed him under circumstances, calculated to awaken such very opposite sensations in the heir to so noble a domain, on first taking possession of it.

The afternoon was wet and dreary on which the carriages entered the venerable park of Liancour. Villerose made a vigorous effort over himself to set an example of cheerfulness to guests, whom his heart so truly welcomed; and he succeeded in veiling under an assumed hilarity from all but one his real feelings; that one, whose eye now accustomed to read through his every motion of the soul that animated it, could not like others be deceived; she saw and sympathized in the secret sadness which hung on him.

As they proceeded towards the chateau, through an avenue dark and gloomy from the foggy vapour which rendered the surrounding objects vague and indistinct, the Marquis, from time to time looked anxiously from the windows of the carriage, in the vain hope of recognizing some

spot, which might recall to his remembrance that he had not always been a stranger there. He forced a smile, as in answer to the Baroness's questions, he at once confessed his motive, and its irrationality, from the early infancy in which he had been removed from France.

Six months were passed, since the period at which Villerose was first expected at Liancour; but from fulfilling this intention, he had been diverted by Sigismond's invitation to take Isenberg in his way thither; and the preparations made to receive and welcome him under the direction of Otho, the venerable steward, (who had served three generations of his family) were now become spoiled, or out of season.

It was with particular regret, that the good man dwelt on the impracticability of exhibiting, in the present

humid state of the atmosphère, the grand display of fire works, which was to have given for three successive nights, life and splendor to the scene. The Marquis, set his heart at ease on this, and every other cause of grievance; while his guests, more than ever attached to the young lord of the domain, by his amiable and engaging demeanor towards themselves and every one around him, passed beneath his roof a happy evening; nor did they till late retire to their respective apartments.

It was at an early hour the next morning, that Carenthéa, perfectly recovered from the slight fatigue of her journey, delighted with the novelty of the scene, and full of life and frolic, gaily entered the chamber of her younger sister, whom she found already dressed.

"Oh! my dear," she began, "I am at my wit's end, for some striking piece of roguery by which to *electrify* De Lerma into one of his entertaining trepidations. The poor man has for the last week been so tiresomely happy, and so gravely satisfied with himself and bride elect, that I am undone if I cannot by some *coup de main* drive him back into the sea of doubts and perplexities, from whence he has lately emerged! All this mischief has arisen from the *cramping* circumstance of my having been shut up during that time in the same carriage with him, which prevented my even once giving him the slip; while the unlucky whim of my papa's choosing to take Pauline's place, and continue our fellow-traveller, kept me perforce on such pretty obliging behaviour, that I am in the most imminent danger of being mistaken by him, for you.

"My dear Carenthéa, how you can take pleasure in so cruelly teizing Don Alphonso, and by your vexing ways, not unfrequently depriving him of that very dignity of character, which you have often confessed to Pauline and myself, first fixed your partiality on him, is quite incomprehensible to me," said Viola.

"Is it so? interrupted her laughing sister: "Why then as I have ever thought it loss of time and words to talk to persons on subjects they do not understand, we will wave this if you please for the present. I thank heaven, I shall for the next few days, enjoy sufficient *space* for my own invention once more to expand and exercise itself; I will try therefore, if I cannot accomplish my purpose without your assistance. In the mean time what shall we do with ourselves for the next two hours?—for I dare

say, no one will be stirring before: Suppose we explore a little ?"

In saying this she opened a door which led from the adjoining dressing room into an apartment beyond, and the sisters arm in arm advanced into the middle of it, and surveyed its magnificent dimensions. "Now I advise you," said Carenthéa, "as soon as you become Marquise de Villerose et D'Aubigne to convert, without loss of time, this into a Theatre. In the meantime we will get up an appropriate piece for our *début*, in which the Marquis shall play the *Inconstant*, you the Sentimental Wife, De Lerma the *Comic* Lover, I the Whimsical Mistress, and in short, we will all act in character. "This room beyond," she added, passing forward and opening it, "shall at the same time be changed into a——" No; "suddenly interrupting her speech, as they stood ri-

vetted in wonder at the objects which saluted them—" No, not for the world should any thing here be changed. Good Heaven!—is that illusion or reality?" and as she spoke, with animated marks of admiration, she waved her hand round the apartment.

Viola, who had shrunk back with that modest diffidence the sensitive mind experiences under the apprehension of having intruded on the company of strangers, penetrating at a second glance the deception which had created that fear, and filled Carenthèa with rapture, now advanced, and the eyes of both sisters were immediately attracted by a picture at the upper end of the room, representing two figures as large as life, which were reflected by mirrors, so artfully disposed, as to catch and multiply them in every direction, giving to the apart-

ment on the first coup d'oeil, the appearance of being occupied by different groups of living characters.

This masterly painting pourtrayed a lady, whose commanding and luxuriant beauty, long kept them gazing in pleasing fascination. Her attitude seemed studiously chosen to display the voluptuous attractions of her form, over which was negligently thrown a robe, so pliant, that it veiled without concealing its perfect symmetry.

At her side stood a Chevalier of noble aspect, whose looks were bent with impassioned earnestness on a ring, it appeared, the lady had recently placed on his finger.

On drawing nearer the painting, its motto became visible to the sisters, who read,

"CONSTANT TILL DEATH."

Viola felt uuaccountably shocked as she now contrasted the lady's coun-

tenance with that of her apparent lover. On his were deeply impressed, sentiments of mingled confidence, regret, and tenderness; while in the bewitching smile which hovered on her humid lips, triumph was alone visible. Her eyes fine, large, and eloquent, as they were represented carelessly turned from the expressive features of the Chevalier, seemed to have fixed themselves with a steady and interrogating gaze on those of the youngest daughter of the house of Isenberg, and appeared to challenge her participation in the unfeeling levity which swayed her bosom. The shape, the colour, all but the expression, were exactly those of the Marquis, and Viola in vain seeking that, turned from their penetrating regards, with a painful feeling of bashful disappointment, and read beneath the picture the following inscription wrought in tapestry.

" Eleanora Marquise de Villerose has devoted the heavy hours of her lord's absence, to the delightful task of perpetuating, on the spot on which it was breathed, the memory of that vow of constancy, which she has so fervently pronounced; thereby hallowing this temple, and rendering it worthy to be the scene of those boundless joys, promised them in their restoration to each other."

From their date, these lines appeared to have been inscribed eighteen months before the birth of the present Marquis; but from their contemplation Viola was speedily drawn back, as by irresistible magic, again to meet the steady gaze of this remarkable lady.

While she stood, as it were spell-bound before the almost breathing canvass, the ever restless and self-

occupied Carenthèa, was seized with the idea of so placing herself, as to form one of the groups as they were every where reflected; by which happy device, she was enabled again to survey them with new pleasure, and compare the character of her own lovely face with that of her, whom she could not help regarding as a kind of rival. In this comparison she lost not much of her good humour, for after satisfying herself with the scrutiny she exclaimed—"Well, the late Marquise must have been a woman of surprising taste and beauty, that is certain! I cannot say she has so liberally supplied her son with either, as might have been expected; yet I beg pardon child—the man is quite well enough since you think him so! and would be still more animated and agreeable if you could but contrive now and then to make him look about

him a little, as I do his very learned and philosophic friend.

But what a sweet prospect does this window present, hill and dale, wood and water; and as I exist there are two living animals in the left avenue, walking erect! Good heavens! if they should be wild men of the woods! Have you no curiosity Viola to see them?—no apprehension of the mischief they may be meditating? Nay they are absolutely casting their terrific glances this way, and look as if they were considering how they may entrap us. Well, you may stay if you please, and be caught without difficulty; but for myself, I am resolved to have a fair scamper yet for the preservation of my liberty."

Saying which, she bounded into the the large saloon they had just before crossed, and quickly regained the dressing room of Viola; who, after satis-

fying herself that the objects of her sister's pretended fright, were no other than Don Alphonso and the Marquis, followed the whimsical Carenthèa to her apartment. There, alternately entertained by her wild sallies and disconcerted by her railleries, she remained till Therese came to inform them, that breakfast was awaiting them.

They found their friends all assembled on their entrance, and engaged in vainly endeavouring to appease Doctor Martimas, who was expressing great wrath at the inattention of some of the domestics, in having either left the portmanteau containing his apparel at Isenberg, or suffered some one to steal it, in the progress of their journey from thence. Certain it was that no such portmanteau had arrived at Liancour; and the doctor felt little consolation in the

desire every one manifested, to assist him by a loan of part of theirs, since his size was so disproportionate to any of the party, as to leave no hope of accommodating their habiliments to his own mighty bulk.

The idea of this journey had never met his hearty concurrence; and he now took occasion to throw out many observations, so unpleasant to Lady Aberdale, and offensive to the rest of the company, who out of respect to her, forbore to notice them, that a degree of gloomy restraint seemed to prevail in the saloon, when the lovely sisters, in all the bloom of youth, health, and innocence entered it.

As soon as breakfast was over, the Baron accompanied by Doctor Martimas, left the room for the purpose of interrogating his people respecting the luckless portmanteau; Lady Aberdale and the Baroness, retired to ques-

tion the female attendants on the same subject; to some of whom they thought it not improbable the mischief was imputable; while the young people continued for some time to chat and amuse themselves in the apartment where they had been left by the rest of the party.

But it seemed decreed, that uninterrupted harmony was not long to preside that morning, even over the whole of the *juvenile* part of the company. Carenthéa, who from the moment of entering the saloon, had entirely discarded the frolic mirth she had been indulging with her sisters, received the attentions of De Lerma with a langour and absence of mind so unlike her deportment towards him for the last week, that his spirits soon took alarm and became distressed in proportion to the hilarity with which her late discreet conduct towards her lover had inspired him.

The attention of Viola, had soon after entering the room, been powerfully attracted by a small grey parrot, whose leg was attached by a slight gold chain to a perch of the same metal, which was fastened near the top of an elegantly embossed pedestal, and stood in one of the window recesses. The bird had over and over again, during breakfast, repeated in a distinct and somewhat mournful tone, "*Poor Eleonore ! Alas ! thy love is far away !*"

The frequent repetition of these words, but still more the sameness of the cadence in which they were given utterance, produced a very painful effect on the sensitive feelings of Viola, over whose ear they from time to time seemed to come with a like depressive effect, as the monotonous tolling of the bell of death

On some of the party's quitting the room, she arose and approaching the bird, spoke to it in that voice of gentleness which so seldom fails to win the confidence of even the most timid animal; "Poor Eleonora!" said Viola, imagining it to be the parrot's name, while she at the same time rubbed its penciled head: "Poor Eleonora!"

"*Alas! thy love is far away!*"—repeated the bird, in its former plaintive cadence.

A footstep which she heard near her, made Viola at that instant turn, and she beheld at her side the Marquis.

"*Alas! thy love is far away,*" re-echoed the flutterer, while the eyes of Villerose were with mournful, yet passionate tenderness fixed on hers.

"My friend", said Viola, making an effort to conceal how fully she par-

ticipated in the heaviness of heart which was visible in every speaking feature of the Marquis; "what *love* is this pretty creature so pathetically lamenting?"

"Otho has been this morning telling me," replied Villerose," that the bird was a favorite of my mother, who taught it those melancholy words during my father's first absence from her, soon after their marriage. He says, whilst she resided solitary at Liancour, she used to sit whole hours listening to its eternal repetition of that sentence. But I cannot bear it, added he, speaking rapidly, I shall make the good Darmet, who it seems has had the care of the bird for many years, remove it into her own apartment, while I remain here alone. Will you regret my Viola, that the business which brings me hither, is likely to detain me some weeks from

you, and that the Baron has this morning exacted of me the promise, that I will not quit this place till it is accomplished ?"

"You will then certainly not pass your Christmas with us," said Viola, while a sigh unconsciously escaped her, "and we shall meet at Isenberg, instead of Lady Aberdale's ! Well my friend," added she, vainly endeavouring to speak cheerfully, "that is surely better than your risking to be again called unwillingly to Liancour, which you would do, by quitting it before you have settled the affairs which demand your presence."

Something Villerose had begun in a low voice to say in reply, was at that moment overpowered by the voice of Miss Wanmore, which raised to a very high pitch, and vociferating very angry words in a key between a scold and a cry, broke on their astonished

ears, and made both Viola and the Marquis turn hastily towards her, in the hope of discovering the cause.

Letitia, had on the preceding afternoon fully expected that she should have been greeted with, she knew not what, of festive novelties on their first reaching the mansion of the Marquis; but afterwards consoled herself for the disappointment, with the hope that on the next day, she should be introduced to a croud of fashionable young men, whom she imagined would lose no time in calling on Villerose to compliment him on his arrival.

Under this impression, she had spared no pains that morning in decorating her person with a view to conquest, and had afterwards paid the housekeeper a visit for the purpose of learning, through her, who was most deserving the graces she meant to display; when to her infinite dissatis-

faction, she learnt from the respectable old woman, that at present, there were no gentlemen in the neighbourhood. Those who were not on actual duty with their regiments, having some time before left the country, to pass their winter at Paris.

The discomfiture which Doctor Martimas had experienced in the loss of hisportmanteau, great as it was, fell short of that with which Miss Wanmore, listened to intelligence so fatal to her hopes; and she had seated herself at the breakfast table in a temper so ruffled, as to predispose her to take offence the first opportunity, without waiting to consider if any one intended to offend her.

Letitia saw, with the greatest bitterness, her prospect of acquiring a new lover at Liancour thus fade away, from the total change which had of late taken place in the manners of

Sigismond towards her. In consequence of the Chevalier Florio's having pointed out to him, during their stay at Augsburg, the presumptuous hopes to which the indulging himself in making Miss Wanmore the subject of his entertainment, had given birth in that young lady, he suddenly adopted so entire a change of conduct whenever she was concerned, as to have plunged him for the present into utter disgrace with her.

Till since the Chevalier had left them, Miss Wanmore did not sensibly feel the want of Sigismond's attentions; as Florio under colour of extricating him from her persecutions, had good humouredly played the gallant with her so dexterously, that the very distant terms on which they were now arrived with each other, had appeared to originate in herself.

When the Marquis followed Viola

to the window, he had left De Lerma in the act of very earnestly addressing Carenthéa, who, instead of evincing by her answers that she had been attending to one word he was uttering, abruptly silenced him by exclaiming, "Do you not think, Sir Launcelot, that it has greatly marred the pleasure of our excursion?"

"If you mean the loss of Martimas's portmanteau," said the smiling Baronet, "to *himself* possibly it has; but for any one else, further than it regards—

"Good heavens!"—interrupted Carenthéa, with affected vexation, "is it in nature that you can construe words into so silly a signification, which were expressive of nothing but regret at the Chevalier Florio's having quitted Isenberg before our journey was suggested; for had he known of it, I am very sure he would have made one of our party."

"I wish he had," sighed Miss Wanmore.

"Florio, by accompanying us," pursued Carenthéa, without noticing this sympathetic ejaculation—"would have enlivened, and made us all as happy and light-hearted as himself. I am surprised that you, Don Alphonso, do not endeavour to acquire his airy style of conversation; you cannot imagine how infinitely more entertaining it is, than those endless *morne* speeches in which you are at times given to indulge."

"That, I think is not the most polite compliment to Don de Lerma," said Miss Wanmore acrimoniously, "at least, were I the encouraged lower of a lady, I should not conceive it so."

"I rather suspect," said Sigismond, "desirous of giving a ridiculous turn to a conversation, which he could not

fail to perceive had deeply hurt his friend, "I rather suspect the Chevalier is gone to be married."

"No, brother," replied Carenthéa, with a seriousness which entirely defeated his intention, "the Chevalier solemnly protested to me, on the morning of his departure from Isenberg, that if he ever marries, it shall be one of our house."

"The deuce he did!"—cried Sigismond, with surprise, "and pray on which member has he been pleased to fix his roving inclinations?"

"Of that brother," replied Carenthéa, throwing her eyes down with pretended modesty, while an expression of arch roguery played over her beautiful countenance, "of that brother, it would ill-become me to inform you at present; but the time will come," added she, casting a glance at the agitated De Lerma, which greatly

tended to allay the storm, the whole tenor of her late discourse had been calculated to raise in his bosom—"the time will come, when I may no longer have any secrets of this kind to conceal from you."

The softened tone of voice which accompanied the encouraging look, soothed her lover, at the moment, with the effect of magic; but it had not the power entirely to efface the impression her levity had previously fixed on his mind.

It was in consequence of the declaration made thus publicly by Carenthéa, of the Chevalier's having confessed a predilection for one of the family of Isenberg, at the very period Miss Wanmore had persuaded herself of the empire her own charms were acquiring over him, that Letitia had lost all self-command. After uttering, with much passion, the speech which

had surprised the attention of the Marquis and Viola, whose purport was expressive of a disbelief of Carenthéa's assertion, she precipitately made her exit, from the apartment, in tears of rage and indignation; and in the next minute the Baroness and Doctor Martimas rejoined them.

The rain which fell in torrents during the rest of the day, confined them to the house, and although several of the party exerted themselves to make it pass off agreeably, an evident gloom hung on them. Doctor Martimas was surly; Miss Wanmore sullen; Pauline languid and dispirited; and the Baroness unwell. At an early hour they all retired to rest. Viola, with an impression, that Liancour was the most sombre place she had ever visited; and grieved that Villerose was under the necessity of continuing there after her family left it.

CHAP. V.

It was about two in the morning when the whole family, except Villerose and Otho (who had been engaged talking over the business to be accomplished) were buried in profound sleep, that a loud knocking at the great gate of Liancour surprised them.

The steward immediately hastened to awaken the drowsy porter, while the Marquis vainly employed himself in considering who could be the intruders at an hour so unseasonable.

He was not, however, long left in a state of suspense: Otho returned with the information that the persons just arrived were two couriers bear-

ing letters of consequence to the Baron and Madam Isenberg, adding that they entreated immediate access to the former.

This intelligence so much alarmed the Marquis, that he went himself to the travellers, for the purpose of ascertaining, if their business was really of such urgency as to require the disturbing his guests.

But the doubts which had led to the enquiry vanished on finding from one of them, that he had been dispatched from Isenberg by the Countess D'Aubry, with interesting intelligence for her daughter.—That on his arrival there, hearing that her ladyship and family had some days before departed from thence for Liancour, he had merely halted long enough to refresh himself, and again set forward in the hope of overtaking them, accompanied by a domestic whom the

Lady Marguerite had ordered to attend him.

The speaker having given this brief explanation, repeated his request that the letters with which he was charged, might be instantly delivered; and Villerose taking them from him, went himself to the door of the Baron's apartment, and awakening him, put them into his hands; he then returned to the library which he had recently quitted.

It was with a disordered step and agitated heart, that Villerose traversed the room for two hours, revolving in his mind the most probable subject of the dispatches. He had learnt from Madam Isenberg's own lips, that since her quitting the roof of her parents, neither of them had ever deigned to address to her one line! The effect this persevering relentlessness had produced on the health and spirits of

the Baroness he had himself witnessed, and most earnestly did she desire that a reconciliation, so essential to her peace, should take place.

Did then these dispatches bear such overtures? Was the only drawback to the happiness of a famliy so dear to him, and of which he was soon to become one, by a tie more precious to him than life itself, about to be removed?

Such were the questions which he revolved; yet the hope that was awakened in him, connected with this subject, was mingled with an indefinable anxiety, which precluded all chance of repose; and Villerose, unmindful of the hour, continued to pace the library till four, when he was joined there by the Baron. That nobleman had come to inform him of the circumstances which were about to lead to the very event he had been anticipating.

The newly arrived letters were written by De Crevecœur, and signed by the Countess, but in a hand so unsteady, that her daughter could scarcely recognize her much loved characters. These letters apprised them that the Count D'Aubry, believed to be at the point of death, had been prevailed on by that generous kinsman to receive and pardon his so long estranged child, ere he was called to the presence of that awful judge, of whom we supplicate forgiveness, even "as we forgive them who trespass against us."

Enfeebled by suffering, and softened towards his once much-loved Gertrude, as the moment approached which was about to separate them for ever, his impatience became extreme, once more to fold her to his paternal bosom; and his nephew, in the name of the Countess, conjured the Baroness

and her lord, not to delay hastening to their arms.

The complicated feelings with which Madam Isenberg learnt these unexpected tidings, had, for a while, so much disordered her, that the Baron said he almost despaired of her being able to undertake the fatigue of a journey, on which she was nevertheless inexpressibly impatient to set out.

He had left her now somewhat calmer, and surrounded by her children, all of whom, their grandfather wished to embrace and bless. The Baron added, that they were all apprised of his intention of departing with them at the earliest dawn, and the domestics were already engaged in preparations for that event.

Villerose now expressed his resolution to attend them to Paris, in which city, he understood, the Count

lay ill at his hotel; but the Baron, who knew he had appointed the next day on which to meet several persons on the affair which summoned him to Liancour, firmly opposed this intention. He reminded the Marquis of the promise he had given him, not to quit that place till the object was accomplished which rendered his presence necessary; remarked that their journey would be rapid, and their time too much engrossed on their first arrival, by the family scenes which must follow its termination, not to render it the fittest possible opportunity for him to employ, in finally arranging a business, which delay must render still more intricate and perplexing. The Baron ended by declaring, that under the circumstances this journey would be undertaken, he totally disapproved of either himself or Don Alphonso's accompanying

them; yet should his family's stay in the French capital be delayed beyond the period necessary for him to remain at Liancour, he should not oppose their joining them in that city.

What had the Marquis to offer in opposition to arguments so *rational?* Nothing which could have any chance of being admitted by that respected friend; he therefore remained silent.

The Baron appearing to imagine this point settled, now arose, saying he must return to Madam Isenberg, and after begging that Villerose would undertake to inform De Lerma of what had first passed between them, he quitted the library, leaving his late companion dispirited and wretched.

The black shades of night which had for many hours wrapped in impenetrable gloom both heaven and earth, had slowly retired towards the west; and in the east, the sky was be-

coming gradually tinged with red, as Villerose returned from performing the Baron's wish respecting De Lerma.

It was with melancholy steps that he was bending his way towards the saloon in which the party had passed the preceeding morning, when he encountered, equipped for her journey, the lovely being who was so painfully occupying his thoughts.

They started at sight of each other, but in the next moment the Marquis, eagerly advancing, took the hand of Viola in silence, and led her back into the apartment she had just quitted.

Together they approached the window, near which the bird, whose monotonous plaints had so much affected them the day before, silent and motionless, was yet resting on his perch, his head still buried beneath

his downy wing, in soft unbroken slumber.

Villerose pressed to his heart the trembling hand he held, as directing her attention to the sleeping bird, in a low and mournful voice he said, "His ill-omened words are nearly accomplished! Oh, my love, *you* go, and I am forbidden to accompany you."

"But you will, I hope, very soon follow us," replied Viola tenderly, "so soon," added she faintly smiling, while a tear glittered in her eye, "that you may scarcely have time to perfect yourself in the theme of poor Eleonora's lamentation."

"Alas! my mother!" said Villerose, "vain was *thy* lamentation. It could not recal thy husband from his early grave!"

The window near which the lovers were standing, exactly faced the east,

from whence streams of light, all rushing from one common centre, now poured through the atmosphere, illuminating with their golden rays the vast horizon! The sun, which for the last three days had been invisible, was rising in his majestic splendor, and disclosed the new-born day!

"What a sight is there!" cried the astonished and enraptured Viola. "Oh my friend, never till now have I beheld that heavenly orb, first elevate his glorious disk above the earth, to begin his daily course, and smile on man! How does he revive all nature by his presence, swelling the heart with joy, and raising it to the throne of his divine Creator!"

"To me," replied the Marquis mournfully, "he imparts no joy.—He condescended not to smile on your arrival here, but the hour which separates us, which carries you far from

me, he gilds with his refulgent blaze! Behold the change effected on the surrounding objects, thus brilliantly irradiated by the glorious planet! and as he mounts still higher he will dispel the last remnants of those gloomy fogs which have till now obscured the landscape."

"Believe me they are emblematic of the clouds which now obscure our happiness," she replied, "a few short weeks and they will like those have disappeared."

"My Viola!" said Villerose, after he had for some minutes in silence contemplated that angelic countenance, where, "with the light of thoughtful reason mixed, shone lively fancy, and the feeling heart;" "my Viola! I taught thee first to love; in seeking thee, I learnt what true love was—could either then, on earth, find happiness without the other?"

Oh no ! Villerose," she solemnly replied, (noting with deep emotion the visible effect, anxiety and a night of sleepless watchfulness had wrought in his dejected features) " but are you not to blame to cherish thoughts calculated to depress you ? what have you to fear ? our affections sanctioned by my parents,—each confident of the sacred sympathy which must for life unite us ?" —

Yon heavenly orb is witness to those words," interrupted the Marquis with impassioned earnestness, after a moments pause he added—" and still smiles on us in unclouded majesty— Oh ! speak them yet again, that by their magic sounds they may convert the superstitious dread which late hung on me, into the precious hope, that clothed in his refulgent glory, he deigns to sanctify our mutual faith !"

" Bear witness then, thou brightest

star in the creation," ejaculated Viola with enthusiastic fervor, "bear witness of the sacred engagement, to whose fulfilment, I, in thy radiant presence, voluntarily pledge myself! "Villerose!" pursued she, turning on him those modest eyes, whose beams on his alone extatic shone, "Villerose, while life is lent me, I am only yours!"

The Marquis clasping her to his devoted heart, sealed on her lips the sacred promise; then taking precipitately from his bosom a ring, he with impressive solemnity said, while presenting it to her, "Preserve this till we meet again."

The dazzling rays at that moment playing on the brilliant gems which encircled its motto, prevented her from immediately decyphering it, and the voice of Carenthéa, which was just then audibly heard approaching

the saloon, made her mechanically secrete it, from a dread of encountering her raillery. She had scarcely effected this, when the door opened, and followed by the disconsolate Don Alphonso, the sprightly girl entered the apartment to tell her sister, that all was now ready.

The Baron's first intention of departing from Liancour with the earliest dawn, had been defeated by the very agitated state of his lady's spirits. Pauline also, whose languor and nervous complaints, far from yielding to the remedies prescribed for their cure, visibly gained ground daily, had been so hurried by the sudden event which was about to carry them to Paris, that she appeared for some time scarcely in a more fit condition to undertake the journey than her mother.

In the meanwhile, every preparation had been made by the domestics; and

Lady Aberdale had determined to set off that morning for Rhonberg, with Sir Launcelot, Miss Wanmore and the Doctor, from whom she expected no peace till his wardrobe had been replenished.

Let us leave her with her party pursuing their way thither, and while the two friends are vainly seeking in each other's society at Liancour, that perfect satisfaction which had formerly embellished their intercourse, we will accompany the family of our heroines, in their rapid journey to the metropolis of France.

Far different was the effect given to the magnificent domain of the Marquis, by the fair day on which they drove through it, on their departure, from that wet and gloomy one, on which they entered it. The serene morning was decked in all her dewy beauty, myriads of sparkling drops

trembled amid the grass, and hung suspended from every bough; while the cloudless sky was deeply tinged with azure.

Viola, however, was not now in a temper of mind to remark this difference; one image alone filled her imagination, and occupied her thoughts: it was the last look of Villerose, as the carriage, in which he had placed her, drove from the castle gate!

An almost insupportable oppression seized on her heart, when the windings of the road entirely shut from her contemplation the spot on which he was still standing, fixed and motionless!

The strong presentiment which he evidently entertained, that some impending evil threatened them, possessed itself of her mind, and baffled every effort she could make to banish it; every argument she could devise to convince herself of its improbability.

As the distance encreased, which separated them, each hour of lengthened absence more fully convinced her of the indefinable charm his society possessed for her; a charm, of which, till deprived, she was very imperfectly aware. Then did the consciousness press on her, that without Villerose, whose mind, whose taste, whose sympathetic chord, so justly harmonized with hers; her former pleasures and pursuits had forever lost their wonted attractions; that life itself must henceforth be comparatively a blank!

By suffering reflections such as these, almost exclusively to fill her, mind, Viola by degrees felt the apprehension fast gaining ground on her that they should meet no more: and when they stopped at the inn in which they were to pass the night, she retired immediately to her chamber, where

she freely indulged those tears she had with so much difficulty suppressed during the day.

When alone, she took from its place of concealment the pledge given her that morning by her lover, and with scrutinizing interest examined its device. The motto expressed these words, "*Constant till Death.*" In the same instant that Viola read them, she recognized in the form of the ring, and the sentence engraved on it, so perfect a resemblance to that on the finger of the Chevalier, as represented in the remarkable painting which had on the preceding day so irresistably arrested her attention at Liancour; that she hesitated not a moment to believe it the very same which had once passed from the hand of the lovely Marquis de Villerose, to that of her departing Lord!

With this conviction, the recollec-

tion rushed to the memory of Viola, of how soon after that token had been received, the fondly attached beings who had exchanged possession of it, were divided from each other by the barrier of death.

In the depression of spirits under which she just then suffered, it is not surprising that she regarded its thus passing, under similar circumstances from the Marquis to herself, as an ill-omen of their future fates. But whatever those fates might prove, the ring was a pledge of love given to her by Villerose! As such, with mournful tenderness she contemplated it—caressed it---hung it in her bosom, and at a late hour retiring to bed, she sank into a sweet repose, while pressing the treasured motto to her heart.

Such were the feelings and impressions under which this journey was performed by Viola. Whatever those

of Pauline might internally have been, her countenance and manners bore no testimony to their being of a less anxious and distressing nature; while the animated face of Carenthéa by turns reflected the various sensations which agitated her volatile mind; sometimes exhibiting slight shades of regret at her separation from Don Alphonso, which were quickly succeeded by impatient curiosity, or eager expectation of the new and inviting pleasures, which awaited her in the gay and elegant metropolis of the gayest nation in the world.

The Baron alone accompanied his lady in the first carriage. He had charged Sigismond with a letter to his friend De Saintville, to whose hotel he directed him to carry his sisters, and the young Isidore, attended by Delmond on their first arrival at Paris; while himself and Madam Isenberg

should drive immediately to that of the Count, to which, after the first interviews were past, he purposed himself fetching his family. It was equally his desire, and that of their mother, that his children should not witness, their conciliatory meeting with her parents.

As they drew nearer the termination of their journey, the impatience of the Baroness became more vehement, least her father should have expired before their reaching him; and the last night they were on the road, no persuasions nor remonstrances could prevail on her to stop, for even an hour's rest. "Oh! Rhodolph," she said, in answer to his urgency, "when fleeing from them, did we think of personal fatigue? name it not now, I charge you, but let us hasten to their feet."

CHAP. VI.

It was at early day in the season, when the morn, "late rising o'er the drooping world, lifts her pale eye unjoyous," that the Baron and his lady entered that city, from whence they had with so much precipitancy fled twenty-two years before!

The streets were still deserted, save where here and there, solitary stragglers were seen shivering in the chilling blast; while sleet was fast falling on their defenceless heads—melancholy instances of fellow-beings, who amidst the abodes of luxury and splendor, were destitute of a friendly roof under which to find shelter!

Those, who at such an hour, and in

a season so dreary, have ever dejectedly driven through the suburbs of a great city; dreading some evil tidings that may await them within its walls, can alone fully comprehend the sickness of heart with which Madam Isenberg silently, yet anxiously, threw her eyes from the carriage windows, and surveyed, without distinguishing the objects which saluted them!

At length they reached the Hotel D'Aubry; that mansion in which a part of many years of her childhood had sweetly stolen away; when to be caressed and fondled by those parents whom she had since deserted, was all she knew of joy and happiness!

As the porter obeyed the summons to the door, the Baroness in speechless agony laid her hand on the arm of her lord—he understood its meaning, and impatiently demanded if the Count were still alive?

The fast receding consciousness of Madam Isenberg was restored by the affirmative answer that was given; and the Baron taking advantage of her renovated courage, lifted her from the carriage, and carried her into the mansion; in which a domestic led the way to an apartment: then saying he would instantly announce their arrival to the Chevalier de Crevecœur, he quitted it, and closed the door on them.

The interval between his departure and the entrance of her cousin, was principally passed by the Baroness, in lifting her heart to the throne of Heaven in gratitude for the double blessing of finding herself again admitted under the paternal roof, and knowing that her parents were still alive to receive and welcome her.

All the calming effects this devout occupation was capable of producing

over the harrassed spirits of Madam Isenberg, was necessary to prepare her for what she had yet to suffer! but at present she felt as if the load of anxiety which had, during her journey, been every hour accumulating, was now suddenly removed from her heart, and tears of tenderness were bathing her cheeks, as she was recognizing in the well remembered objects around her, traces of the most beloved of mothers, when the door was opened, and De Crevecœur entered.

Strong agitation was visible in his countenance and manners, as he approached them; but the Baron discovered in this nothing on which to found any new alarm, since the recollections very naturally roused by this interview with persons, towards whom he was so delicately circumstanced, were in themselves more than sufficient to shake his firmness.

The Baroness, whose mind was too much pre-occupied with the promised happiness which awaited her, to view De Crevecœur in any other light than the friend to whom she owed that opening prospect, now demanded eagerly, if she might not instantly go to her parents? He replied, he must prepare her for the circumstances under which they would meet.

Leading her to a seat, he now proceeded to inform her the Count D'Aubry was no longer supposed to be in immediate danger. The alarming paroxysm of gout which from having attacked him in a vital part, had at first threatened to prove fatal, subsided at the moment he was believed past all hope, and the excruciating pain under which the patient suffered having left him, he was sunk into a quiet slumber, from which the physicians augured the happiest effects: he

added, that his uncle had not yet awakened from it, when he quitted to obey their summons.

"But my mother?" interrupted the impatient Baroness, "will not she see me? Is she not eager once more to behold her so long banished child?"

"Why is it my evil destiny," said De Crevecœur, "to be the bearer of tidings that must overwhelm you with grief and disappointment? Oh my cousin," pursued he, in a tone of bitterness, "that excellent woman is for ever denied the enjoyment of a pleasure so exquisite! She will never more behold the much loved fugitive, whose loss has cost her such ceaseless tears!"

The new-born hope which had been kindled in the bosom of Madam Isenberg, was suddenly extinguished by this unexpected, this heart-piercing intelligence. De Crevecœur, whose

eyes, while speaking, were fixed on her face, was shocked as he perceived the strong expression of despair it instantly exhibited, and he abruptly added, "yet the comfort is still left her of folding you to her maternal heart, while you, Madam, will henceforth have the consoling power of cheering the dark prospect of her declining years.

"Oh God!" cried the distracted Gertrude, in an agony of terror which defied all controul, "speak, I charge you, keep me no longer in suspense, but tell at once the worst!"

The Baron supported with his arm the sinking frame of Madam Isenberg, while she listened to the explanation of De Crevecœur. That explanation told, that the incessant tears her flight had drawn from her inconsolable mother, first brought on a malady which had long threatened her with

the calamity that had at length overtaken her. The Countess for the last six weeks had been totally deprived of sight.

Long was it, after the almost lifeless daughter had been made to comprehend the nature of this misfortune, ere the least portion of the fortitude necessary to enable her to see her unfortunate parent, could be restored to her.

The Baron at length demanded if the Countess knew of their arrival? and on her nephew's answering that he thought it right to conceal it from her till the Baroness should have been informed of the circumstances under which they must meet, that nobleman requested that no farther delay might take place.

De Crevecœur on this immediately quitted the room to the infinite relief of the Baron; who felt with indigna-

tion, that so far from having sought to soften the shock of intelligence so afflictive to his wife, he had wantonly infused unnecessary venom into the wound he had given her, by asserting that to her filial disobedience, this ever-to-be lamented calamity of her mother, owed its origin.

The Baron was still seeking by tender and consoling words to soothe her, when the door again opened, and an aged female appeared, in whom the afflicted Gertrude soon recognized her once indulgent nurse, the affectionate Manon.

This good creature hesitated on advancing, in what way to address her dear young lady, as she still wished to call her; but that lady on remembering her, in an agony of tears threw herself into her arms.

From Manon, Madam Isenberg learnt a fact, which De Crevecœur

had carefully suppressed. Her mother never participated in the anger denounced against her by the Count; on the contrary, she had earnestly sought to prevail on him to receive and pardon their child. But that nobleman roused almost to frenzy by the defeat of his favorite plan at the very moment it was about to be accomplished; and from day to day still goaded on to greater intemperance by the deep sorrow exhibited by his nephew; before the letters of Gertrude reached them, had demanded of the Countess, with a vehemence her broken spirit could not resist, that she should make her positive election between himself and the offending party, with which to live on terms of future amity; since to maintain intercourse with them both, would henceforth be impossible.

The Countess, firmly persuaded

that loss of reason would follow her further opposition to his will, in his present state of wild irritability, in the hope of averting that still greater calamity, submitted to be guided by him in her future conduct towards their daughter.

The solemn promise he in consequence of this concession exacted from her, was worded with such jealous caution by her husband, as left her no avenue through which she could elude its harsh dictates; and thus she had been made a most unwilling party in this unnatural breach.

The narrative of Manon, was from time to time interrupted by the Baron, who pointed out to his lady, that De Crevecœur would have been more just had he attributed the malady of the Countess, to the unhappiness entailed on her by the unrelenting temper of her lord, than to one single error of a

daughter, who, in every instance but that, had uniformly evinced towards them both, the most exemplary love and duty.

In these sentiments Manon earnestly joined, observing that she had herself been from the first of opinion, that at the bottom, De Crevecœur had been most to blame. His influence over his uncle, she said, it was well known by the family, had been for many years so unbounded, that had he made a right use of the power he possessed, she would long ago have been forgiven, and the unhappy Countess restored to peace before it was too late: Manon lowered her voice as she added —that, sometimes even now she could not help suspecting that De Crevecœur had some sinister motive at the bottom, for having laboured to undo, what he had been so many years effecting. She meant his avowedly bring-

ing about himself that event, which they all believed he had hitherto taken unwearied pains to prevent. "Though perhaps," observed she, "I am in his, tuncharitable. The late sad misfortune of my poor lady may have touched his heart with remorse; and that makes him desirous of softening a calamity he had so great a share in bringing on her!"

"Do you then imagine," demanded the Baron impatiently, "that the late overture for bringing about a general reconciliation originated in De Crevecœur?"

"Of that my lady is entirely satisfied," replied Manon, "wherefore I ought to be certainly so, likewise." To be sure the Chevalier has had great disappointments in life, which he well knew my lord the Count could alone in any way make up to him. First, there was the loss of you

Madam, which to be sure was very grevious ; and grieve enough he did at it, for no one could make that up to him ! Then there was that great estate and title which by the sudden death of his kinsman, who was killed in that terrible duel, my lord positively asserted was his nephews right ; so said every body, yet in the end the law defrauded him of them both, and gave them to a child whom they maintain had no more right to them, than his Holiness the Pope ! My lord had bestirred himself greatly in the cause ; and mortal angry he was, when the Parliament gave judgment against him. However his anger did no good, as it could not reverse the sentence. Nay, I rather think it did harm, for it only the more hardened his heart against my sweet young lady."

The mind of Madam Isenberg was too exclusively filled with one melan-

choly idea to have allowed her giving any attention to the discourse of Manon, after it branched off from the immediate subject which so cruelly tortured her bosom; while that portion of *self-love* which the Baron, in common with every human being possessed, was too agreeably occupied in excusing him to himself (by whispering him, that inflicting on De Crevecœur his *first* disappointment, he had only given him the mortification his subsequent conduct had proved he merited) to feel his curiosity just then awakened as to the particulars of the second. Manon however still continued to talk, till the theme of her comments returned to inform Madam Isenberg, that the Countess was prepared to receive her.

Within five minutes after receiving permission, the daughter was locked in the eager arms of her maternal parent.

When the first wild transports were in some measure subsided, which had been roused by a meeting so long and so incessantly desired by them both, who can paint the complicated feelings of Madam Isenberg on finding herself seated once more beside her mother !— one of her hands tenaciously detained between both those of her beloved parent, as if that parent were fearful of again losing her so lately restored child.

Since last they had enjoyed this blessing, the *maternal chord*, then silent in the bosom of her daughter, had been awakened ! It now for the first time vibrated in perfect unison with that of her mother, and roused a new-born species of tenderness for her before unfelt !

Vain would be the effort to portray the agony with which, under the influence of these exquisitely keen feel-

ings, the daughter contemplated the havoc years, uniformly passed in sorrow, had made in the once beautiful and fondly remembered lineaments of her who gave her life!—and sought to trace one ray of the intelligent animation which was wont to characterise those once clear and lovely eyes, hitherto never fixed on her but beaming with parental love. Now, alas!—dark, visionless, destitute of all expression.

Unable to support the sight, the daughter repeatedly buried her face in the bosom from whence she had once drawn nourishment, in the hope of forgetting a spectacle she had not yet fortitude to endure.

But her altered mother's image had already so deeply engraven itself on her fancy, that again she looked at the reality, in the fond expectation of finding it less heart-rending than her imagination pictured it.

While these passionate emotions were still more enfeebling the before shattered frame of Madam Isenberg, the excellent Countess, whose stronger mind had met with pious resignation the affliction with which heaven had long threatened her, nearly forgot, in recovering the dear privilege of having once more near her, her Gertrude: of touching—of listening to that fondly beloved child, that the delight of again beholding her was forever withheld.

Madam D'Aubry had been kept so entirely ignorant of the actual destiny of her daughter, and had been so greatly deceived as to the result of her precipitate and unsanctioned union, that she had a thousand particulars to learn respecting herself and lord, calculated to comfort and rejoice her.

She longed to receive and bless those pledges of their love for whom the Baron went, as soon as the dreaded

interview had taken place between themselves and the Count. It was of a far less affecting nature than that which had preceded it; and on their quitting the chamber of the invalid, Madam Isenberg, quite exhausted by fatigue and agitation, suffered herself to be conveyed to bed.

It was while her harrassed spirits found repose under the paternal roof from whence she had been so long an alien, that her lovely family were presented by their father to the Count and Countess, and received by them with affectionate regard. De Crevecœur also testified so animated a desire to make them feel welcome to a house in which he had been long accustomed to act the master, that the Baron, though strongly prejudiced against him, acquitted him of all mercenary views with regard to the Count's fortune; since they were per-

fectly incompatible with his promoting the introduction of those who might not improbably prove very formidable rivals to him in the regard of his uncle.

During the first week passed by the family of Isenberg in the hotel of the Count D'Aubry, the health of that nobleman so greatly improved that he was soon enabled to sit up a considerable part of each day; during which period the Baroness, or some of his grand-children, were constantly with him.

As if fearful, however, of agitating himself, he had hitherto carefully avoided all retrospection, or speaking directly of any family concerns, though he had lately hinted to his daughter that his reserve would not much longer continue.

In the mean time the Baroness by degrees recovered from the first shock she had experienced in learning and witnessing the calamity of her mother, while that mother appeared to lose all sense of her own misfortune in the new sources of happiness opened to her.

The anxious tenderness of her daughter, the affectionate solicitude of her grandchildren, particularly the watchful attention of the sweet Isidore, whose amiable young heart was touched with pity for her helplessness, altogether formed so soothing a contrast to the years of solitary mourning she had passed, when no kindred bosom participated in the nature of her sorrows, that she became more than reconciled to an event, to which she secretly believed she owed the successful endeavours of De Crevecœur, in bringing about the happy reconciliation of her husband to their child.

One morning, after every one had

left the breakfast room except Pauline and Viola, whom their cousin detained to shew them some curious medals he had been collecting, a servant entered and delivered into his hand a packet of letters.

De Crevecœur at first ran carelessly over their addresses, throwing them one by one on the table as he read aloud, "To the Baron—Monsieur Delmond—Viola Isenberg." When as he was in the act of presenting this last, he suddenly exclaimed, with a change of countenance and manner, too remarkable to escape observation—"Great God, the arms of Villerose and D'Aubigne!"

That lovely bloom which anxiety and depression of spirits had of late nearly banished the cheeks of Viola, rushed back to them with a painful impetuosity, as still detaining her letter he continued to gaze steadily at her glowing countenance.

At length she said, impatiently extending her hand to receive it—"If it be mine, pray give it me?"

"Does the Baron know and approve of this correspondence?" asked De Crevecœur, with a look which inexpressibly shocked the sweet girl, whom he thus unceremoniously interrogated.

"Of that," replied Pauline, haughtily, "I imagine, Sir, he has not impowered you to enquire?" and as she spoke taking from him, with an air of dignity, the letter which he made no further effort to detain, she presented it to her sister, and they immediately together quitted the apartment.

The letter was indeed from the Marquis, and Viola soon forgot in the pleasure its perusal gave her, the little vexation she had experienced by its detention. It was the first she had ever received from Villerose; who was now for the first time since their reci-

procal attachment had been sanctioned by their parents, separated from her!

With a delight proportioned to the pain his absence had caused her, she indulged herself in dwelling on those sentiments to which she had so often listened with pleasure from the lips of her lover, now traced by his hand in characters with which she was before but imperfectly acquainted. She continued, however, to study these dear characters, long after they were as indelibly engraven on her memory, as were, on her heart, the sentiments they expressed.

Viola, thus dividing her time between this pleasing occupation, and in congratulating herself on the intelligence her lover had communicated to her, that within the next week he should certainly be in Paris, was astonished to be suddenly roused from her forgetfulness of every thing beside, by a summons to dinner.

This summons brought back the remembrance of the impertinence of De Crevecœur, and made her feel extremely reluctant again to expose herself to his remarks. It was therefore with much satisfaction she learnt, from the conversation in which the family were engaged when she joined them, that he had two hours before departed for a distant estate of his uncle's, whither that nobleman had suddenly dispatched him, after he had been for a considerable time shut up with him in consultation in his chamber, for the purpose of transacting there some affairs of consequence.

This was not the only arrangement which had that morning been made. Pauline, whose health had evidently continued to decline more rapidly since her residence in Paris, had afterwards been so affected by the momentary exertion the conduct of De Creve-

cœur towards her sister had called forth, that she had not been half an hour in the room with her mother and the Countess, to whom she went immediately on parting with Viola, when she was seized with an hysteric complaint, which had so much alarmed them both and the Baron also, that they had sent off instantly for medical assistance.

The result of the consultation which followed was, that the young lady should be removed as soon as possible into the country, for the benefit of a purer air. This communication had been made to the Count, who in consequence had suggested a plan, the accomplishment of which was already agreed on.

It was, that on the next day but one, the Countess, accompanied by Isidore, Pauline and Viola, and attended by the Baron, should set off for the cha-

teau D'Aubry, that seat from whence the elopement of Isenberg and Gertrude had formerly taken place, and which was situated but a few leagues from Paris.

Carenthéa and Sigismond were in the meantime to remain with their mother and the Count, till his strength was sufficiently restored to permit his going there also.

Before Viola was summoned to dinner, this affair had been finally settled; and the Baron with Sigismond were gone to fulfil an engagement, into which they had the day before entered, of dining with the Marquis de Saintville.

The Count had signified his wish that all the rest of the family should pass the evening in his apartment, and in compliance with this desire they repaired thither at an early hour.

They found him apparently fast re-

gaining his strength, yet an unusual sternness marked his countenance; and far from appearing as heretofore amused with their conversation, or at all disposed to join in it, he sat silent and absent; yet from time to time regarding alternately the Baroness and her daughters with a scrutinizing examination, which at length became very painful to them.

Madam Isenberg had taken her place next the Countess, to whom she principally addressed herself, on finding her father ill-disposed to attend to her; and in reply to a question of that lady, was relating some particulars respecting the Baron's venerable sister, when her father, who had not appeared to give any attention to the subject of her discourse, abruptly put an end to it by saying—"But that the voice reminds me of her, I should indeed find it difficult to recognize

my once beloved Gertrude D'Aubry, in the Baroness Isenberg !"

There was in this chilling observation, and still more in the tone of bitter disappointment in which it was uttered, something which shocked every one present, and struck a dagger to the heart of his daughter. Her drooping head sank on the shoulder of the distressed Countess, who pressing her to her bosom, said with energetic tenderness, " Never more, dear child of my affection—never from this hour lament for your mother her loss of that sense, the possession of which, might have destroyed an illusion more precious to her than life itself ! Thy voice is indeed the voice of my early darling—when I listen to it, she is present to me just such as I last saw her !—God ! I thank thee," pursued she, lifting her hands towards Heaven with pious fervor—" for having per-

petuated to me, at a price I willingly pay, so sweet an error !"

The silence which followed this affecting ejaculation of Madam D' Aubry, was still unbroken, when a domestic entered to inform her, that a person earnestly entreated the honour of a few minutes conversation with her. The benevolence which ever distinguished her admirable character, induced the Countess, on hearing that the stranger appeared greatly distressed, to signify that she would comply with his request, and taking the arm of her daughter, they immediately quitted the apartment together.

The door was scarcely closed after them, when the Count, turning to his young companions (who were all still under the influence of those emotions the scene they had recently witnessed was calculated to awaken in them) thus addressed them, in a voice which had lost nothing of its sternness

"You have all as yet, your various paths of life to chuse—beware of seeking felicity through those of filial disobedience or duplicity. Let the example of your mother prove an useful lesson, by which her children may reap instruction. Let it teach them, by its deplorable effects on that best of women, my wife, to shun taking to their own bosom never ending remorse, by requiting her maternal cares by black ingratitude; and if the agony which wrings the not unfeeling bosom of my daughter, by the contemplation of the wreck she has made of both health and happiness in her own too fondly devoted parent; let them carefully avoid risking to overwhelm her with hopeless despair, by pointing at her heart through them, the retribution of avenging Heaven!"

The Count would have proceeded in his address, had he not been check-

ed by a circumstance which surprised and alarmed him. Pauline, who had attended to him with an agitation which scarcely allowed her to respire, as he finished his last sentence, sank senseless at his feet, and her terrified sisters were endeavouring to raise, and give her air, when Madam Isenberg, with the Countess returned.

The sudden indisposition of Pauline was attributed to the closeness of the Count's chamber, and she was immediately conveyed to her own, whither her mother accompanied her. On the recovery of her senses she found herself surrounded by her family, who felt still more anxious since this last attack, that she should as speedily as possible be conveyed to the chateau D'Aubry, from the delightful air of which, as it revived on the memory of the Baroness, she felt confident her Pauline would derive essential benefit.

When the late alarm, occasioned by the indisposition of her sister, gave place to the revival of those schemes and hopes which had for some days been occupying the mind of Carenthéa, she congratulated herself over and over again, on her own good fortune, in not having been included in the intended party to the country; and felt convinced that no air could agree better with herself than that of Paris, provided she was permitted to enjoy it at liberty.

During the few hours she had passed at the hotel of the Marquis de Saintville, on her first arrival, she had discovered a spirit kindred with her own, in the animated Ninon, youngest daughter of that nobleman; and short as was their acquaintance, they had parted with regret, when she left her, to accompany the Baron to the mansion of her grandfather.

The congeniality of temper and inclination which had created so early a predilection in each other's favour, had several times since brought Madmoiselle de Saintville to call on Carenthéa; and during a téte-a-téte they had that morning enjoyed, a very pressing invitation was repeated on one side, and listened to with much complacency on the other, to pass some time with her.

Ninon, by way of animating the desire of her fair companion to comply with her wish, held out every incitement likely to effect that object. She informed her that her only sister, who had been very recently married to the Duke de Melcour, was that week to give a most splendid ball, at which the celebrated Don Emanuel, brother to the King of Portugal, was to be present; she would carry Carenthéa thither, she would introduce her to

this fascinating personage, who at present occupied the attention of half the ladies in Paris.

This Prince, not more admired for his personal advantages in the several courts of Europe he had visited, than for the exquisite grace with which he danced, had as yet but once gratified the Parisian fair, by exhibiting his extraordinary powers in that accomplishment, since his arrival in their capital. It had happened that this specimen was given on the night the Duchess de Melcour was presented on her marriage. Ninon, who accompanied her sister, had been not less captivated than the rest of the female world, nor less ambitious of the honour of being selected on some future evening, as his *happy* partner.

Since that first night, however, when Don Emanuel, leading out the Duchess D' Orleans, had merely exhi-

bited himself sufficiently to inspire every one with the most lively desire of seeing him again, he had invariably declined dancing; which had not only the more inflamed curiosity, but had occasioned a competition amongst the ladies, each of whom was emulous of triumphing over his oft expressed repugnance to mingle in the amusement.

"Now, my dear," pursued Madmoiselle de Saintville, "imagine only what immediate fashion and notoriety awaits the next lady, who proves that she possesses the power to tempt this Inexorable from his cruelty!"

These observations of Ninon, were more than enough to set fire to the train which instantly kindled the vanity of Carenthéa, into an ungovernable flame! This was indeed an object well worthy her ambition; and she resolved to leave no means unattempted to gain her parent's permission

to accept an invitation which would open to her the means of making an experiment, for which she was most anxious.

In the ardent wish which now completely filled her giddy mind, of acquiring *notoriety*, and becoming the *fashion* in this gay and elegant metropolis—Carenthéa entirely forgot a letter which she had been reading, but the moment before Ninon was ushered into the apartment in which she was sitting alone, and the good resolutions which it had induced her to make!

The sentiments to which this letter had given birth, were of a very opposite nature from those which since usurped their place. It was from De Lerma—had formed a part of the packet which had been delivered that morning into the hands of De Crevecœur, and was sent to her immediately after her sisters had quitted him.

A certain air of despondence which mingled itself with his most passionate expressions of regard, a painful doubt of his possessing the power of touching her heart, and some allusions (which appeared unconsciously to have escaped him) to proofs of want of tenderness and consideration which she had evinced towards him, particularly on the morning of her departure from Liancour; altogether pretty strongly demonstrated, that absence had awakened reflections in the mind of Don Alphonso, ill qualified to establish that confidence in her affection, necessary to his repose.

As Carenthéa read, she recalled the remembrance of what he was, on his first arrival at Isenberg—then tranquil, satisfied, possessing inexhaustible resources in his own enlarged and highly cultivated mind, of recreation and amusement. She had herself diligent-

ly sought the means of disturbing that enviable tranquility, and had found it!

In securing the means of introducing at her pleasure, joy or vexation into his bosom, had she made a generous use of this acquisition of power? Ah, no!—her heart smote her as she took a retrospective view of what her conduct had been, and she resolved that in future he should have less cause to complain of her.

With Carenthéa, the week she had passed in the hotel of her grandfather had rolled very heavily away, nor could she conceal from herself, that she missed the devoted attentions of her lover, which would have relieved this tiresome week of its tediousness. Under these impressions she sighed sympathetically, as she a second time ran over his expressions of regret at their separation, and was repeating her resolution to amend her conduct towards

him in future, when the lively Mad-moiselle de Saintville broke in on her reflections, and by the theme of her discourse soon put to flight poor Don Alphonso: her temporary remorse at the pain she had given him, and her consequent determination of hence-forth endeavouring by a favourable change in her deportment towards him, to efface the remembrance of the un-easiness she had often in mere sport given him.

Before the young ladies parted, they had consulted on the most proba-ble means of gaining the consent of the Baron and Baroness to this much de-sired visit; to which Sigismond, who joined them before the departure of Ninon, promised with his accustomed good humour, to add his zealous en-deavours.

It was agreed amongst them, that the Marquis de Saintville should first

propose the matter at dinner to the Baron, which was to be powerfully seconded by all those who wished to carry it into effect; and with a pretty sanguine expectation of ultimate success, Carenthéa, in high spirits joined the female part of her family in the *sale a manger*.

The plan which had in the meantime been fixed for the excursion to the chateau D'Aubry, of which she now heard the first hint, much alarmed her, as promising to defeat this projected scheme; till she found it was not intended for the present to include her in it. In the evening, therefore, when, after the recovery of Pauline, she took leave of her for the night, her mind was too entirely filled with the hopes and fears the incidents of the day were calculated to create; and she felt too lively an impatience to know the result of Madam de Saint-

ville's request to her father, to have the least inclination to retire to rest, till she had learnt from Sigismond the particulars of what had passed.

At length she heard the knock which announced his return; and meeting him on the stairs, led him to her dressing room, where she had the pleasure of hearing that the Baron, unable to resist the united entreaties of the charming Duchess de Melcour, whom Ninon had engaged to plead her cause, with those of Madam and Madmoiselle De Saintville, had promised to exert his influence over the Baroness to gain her consent, to allow Carenthéa's passing a week with them.

The Baron performed his engagement, and his lady, finding that it was his wish to indulge his friend's family by allowing their daughter to accept their invitation, offered no opposition to her returning with the Duchess and

Ninon the next morning; who, in the full confidence of gaining the consent of Madam Isenberg, called at the appointed hour for her.

After bidding adieu to her parents, the Count and Countess D'Aubry, and Isidore, she took a hasty but affectionate leave of Pauline, who weak and languid, had not yet risen at the hour of her departure; then in a whisper charging Viola, who was with her, not to indulge her in her melancholy, but to do her best to keep up her spirits till her return amongst them, she hurried away, never once recollecting in her flurry of pleasure and impatience, that instead of putting the letter of Don Alphonso, which she had the day before received, into her pocket, as she meant to have done before setting off, for the purpose of snatching the first opportunity of answering it; she had left it within the leaves of a book on

the table in the saloon, where she deposited it on Ninon's being announced to her just as she had finished its perusal.

It had been agreed between the Duchess and Madmoiselle de Saintville that as the illness of the Count had as yet prevented the presentation of the Isenberg family at the court of Louis the XVth, it was possible that the Baron might disapprove of Carenthéa's appearing in public, previous to that ceremony's having taken place. They therefore resolved to drop all mention of the ball, least a prohibition against her appearing at it, might defeat their wish of seeing her grace the fete; and Carenthéa, struck with the justice of their remarks on this head, readily submitted to be guided by them; observing only, that she was unprepared with a dress suitable for such an occasion.

"If that be your only objection,"

said the Duchess, pulling at the same time the check-string of her carriage, and ordering it to Madam L'Attifet's the court milliner; "we will soon remove so inconsiderable an impediment."

The Duchess de Melcour, gay, volatile, full of vanity; blessed with youth, health, unbounded spirits, and a happy assurance, was, when set off by all the advantages of dress and high fashion, scarcely inferior in beauty to Carenthéa, and equal to her in that graceful hilarity which made life a pastime, and its actors the puppets of her humour.

Too full of self-admiration to have believed in the possibility of a rival; too full of self-consequence to limit her pretensions to personal charms alone, she piqued herself on the rare generosity of drawing to her parties the most lovely of her own sex; and felt that she should give a very re-

markable instance of singular liberality, in herself introducing to a fete, where she might have shone unrivalled, not only the most lovely creature she had ever seen, but from one, who being a perfect *novelty*, must, to say the least, *divide* with her the general admiration and attention of the evening.

As they drove to the *coiffeuse* of the Duchess, she resolved that Carenthéa should shine for taste and elegance in dress, at her ball, as conspicuously as she could not fail to do in personal charms; and when the carriage stopped at the door of Madam L'Attifet, springing from it with the careless bound of conscious superiority, she addressed that distinguished personage, by desiring that she would display some *exquisite novelty* worthy of being graced by the debut of a lady of Carenthéa's pretensions, at the assembly of the Duchess de Melcour!

With the utmost obsequiousness Madam L'Attifet whispered her Grace that she must honour her by allowing her to conduct them to a private room in the interior of the building, which she called the "*Temple of the Graces*," since it was forbidden ground to those who were disowned by them.

"The priestess is worthy of the Fane," said the Duchess, directing to Carenthéa a look of inviting ridicule at the short fat figure of L'Attifet) "Lead on therefore I pray you."

The apartment to which they were shewn, was elegantly fitted up, and appropriately furnished with a mirror reaching from the ceiling to the floor; while several *armoirs* thrown open, exhibited to the ladies, flowers, feathers, ribbons, beads, caps and gowns, in endless and bewildering variety.

While Carenthéa was gazing in delighted admiration at so astonishing a

profusion of ornaments as she had never before seen collected together in one room, the Duchess, for whom the sight (familiar as it was to her) possessed not less powerful fascination, soon forgot in the pleasure of tumbling over the enticing fineries by which she was surrounded, the purpose which had expressly brought her, at that time, within the sphere of their attractions.

Seizing at length on a cap, and turning towards Carenthéa, she said, "now this appears to me perfectly calculated to set off the peculiar character of your features." But it so fell out, that although her Grace appeared to apply this observation to her young companion, her thoughts happened to be so wholely occupied with herself, that instead of placing it on the head of the expecting girl, she tried it on that of a more interesting object in her

ownesteem, the Duchess de Melcour; and as she was arranging the flower to bend more negligently over her left brow, she said affectedly to L'Attifet, "But how came you to name this saloon, The *Temple of the Graces?* Do they often sacrifice at this shrine?"

"Were I *now* called on to give it an appropriate appellation," replied the simpering *coiffeuse*, "your Grace can scarcely doubt that I should denominate it the *Toilet of Venus.*"

"Well, well!" observed the Duchess, taking off the cap which she fancied did not in colour suit her complexion, "there is no denying L'Attifet that you have an incomparably good taste; but let me see if this head-dress, which is certainly less formal than the other, will not give a greater play to the countenance—Oh! worse and worse!" cried she, throwing it aside, and replacing it by a

third; "Nay, this is fit only for a demure young lady, who is about to enter on her noviciate. Do good creature try if you cannot find out something *piquante,* which will give an agreeable archness to the eyes."

The ready L'Attifet obeyed, and the Duchess passed so much time in the contemplation of the effect of this new essay, that Carenthéa began to give over, as hopeless, her being indulged in the pleasure of trying on, that morning, any of the tempting ornaments before her--a gratification for which she had been very impatiently waiting, as with all her thoughtlessness and self-indulgence, she did not possess that degree of fashionable *nonchalance,* which would have enabled her, unblushingly, to share with her Grace in the benefit of the mirror.

The Duchess, however, who was now entirely engrossed in pointing out

to L'Attifet, that this *bonnet* rather threw an expression of cunning than archness over her physiognomy; and in listening to the flattering speeches made her in reply, to attend to any thing else, had totally forgotten that the intention of her being there was to equip Carenthéa, not herself; and after completely tiring herself by a trial of two thirds of the head-dresses in the room, she said—" But enough of these odious caps L'Attifet, take them all away, and shew me some robes which fold and yield to the proportions of a fine form?

Twenty were produced in a minute by the obsequious *faiseuse des robes*, and her Grace still regardless of Carenthéa, instantly displayed her own fine figure by disrobing to try them on. But the *compliments* of L'Attifet were decreed to give the Duchess more satisfaction that morning than

her *dresses*. The first spoilt the beautiful roundness of her bust by being too long, the second encreased it to vulgarity by an opposite extreme, a third gave an appearance of a too great *arrondissement* to the hips, becoming only to *la taille d'une Laitiere*, a fourth a thinness which deprived the form of all dignity. "Yet they are all very elegant, and very superb," said she, as she was carelessly replacing her own dress. Then looking hastily at her watch she exclaimed—"But good heavens how this strange creature has been detaining me, pray order my coach to draw up immediately? Well, L'Attifet, you will not fail to be punctual in sending home the things ordered for this young lady, since you know I never can pardon the least inattention or want of punctuality." And as she spoke, she was leading the way to the

carriage, when the surprised and blushing Carenthéa, who in her life, had never before been so completely thrown into the back ground, stopped her giddy Grace by laying her hand on her arm. Madam L'Attifet on this, with great humility hinted, that as Madmoiselle Isenberg had not tried on either head-dress, robe, tucker or kerchief, it was impossible she could judge what would suit or please her.

The Duchess now recollecting herself said laughingly, "Apropos, I am very glad I have saved her that trouble, for I am sure there is nothing here which would suit that lovely face and nymph-like form. She shall therefore trust to my taste for the direction of a costuma, in which Ninon and myself will also appear. I have for sometime had it in contemplation to form a new æra in dress, by restoring to the female figure the graces of nature,

without offending the modesty of virtue; and will on the occasion of to-morrow effect it. Call therefore at my hotel in an hour, L'Attifet, and I will shew you the Grecian model, after whose drapery our habits shall be fashioned; but remember, as you value my favour, that you breathe not a hint of this important secret." And away the lively Duchess de Melcour fluttered, followed by the half-vexed, half-delighted Carenthéa, who though sorry she had not been allowed to try the effect on herself, of some of Madam L'Attifet's elegant attire, was rejoiced at the idea of first appearing in public, under the sanction of her Grace, habited in a dress which she doubted not would prove as attractive from its novelty, as it was calculated to display, to the greatest advantage, the charms of her person.

Ninon de Saintville, who had been

during the time passed at the *faiseuse des robes* deeply engaged in another apartment with one of the assistants, whom she had been consulting on the mode in which her own trimmings were to be disposed, on learning that her friends awaited her in the carriage, soon after joined them, and they drove immediately to the hotel de Melcour.

Madam L'Attifet was punctual to the appointed hour, and to her surprise found her Grace actually awaiting her arrival! so impatient was she to carry into execution this new whim which had seized her.

The remainder of the morning was spent in reiterated instructions and cautions on one side, and in promises of obedience to orders on the other; nor did the young ladies return to the Marquis de Saintville's till the Duchess went to her evening party, when

she set them down at her father's, after having made them promise to be at her hotel on the next day, sufficiently early to dress there; for she insisted on conducting herself the whole business of their toilet on this occasion.

As they all thought it probable that the Marquise might not altogether approve of her Grace's eccentric plan of costuma, it was settled that nothing was to be hinted respecting it before her; but on their taking leave for the night, Ninon accompanied her guest to her chamber, where she passed some hours in anticipating with her, the remarks and paragraphs to which the appearance of three lovely young women, habited in a style so unlike the then reigning fashion, would probably give rise.

This topic led Ninon into conjectures on the effect it would be likely

to produce on Don Emanuel, whose taste decidedly led him to prefer every thing which was uncommon; and she offered to wager with Carenthéa that he would select one of the three as his partner, if he danced at all.

It very naturally happened, that in a day passed in so much pleasure, hurry and bustle, by Carenthéa, she should not have found a single opportunity to think of the absent Don Alphonso, or his unanswered letter, and that after having sat up till an unusually late hour, chatting with Ninon, she should have immediately sunk into a profound repose on being left by her for the night, from which she did not awaken till far beyond her general hour of rising the next morning.

As soon as breakfast was over, the carriage of the Marquise was announced as being in readiness, and the fore-

noon was passed by herself and the young ladies, in shopping *soberly*—viewing some exhibitions of which Carenthéa soon became weary, and in calling on an old friend of Madam de Saintville, who was in an ill state of health.

As they were about to re-enter their carriage for the purpose of returning home after this visit, a very elegant equipage drove by, and stopped at the door next that at which they were standing.

"Mon Dieu!" whispered Madmoiselle de Saintville, "that is the Prince of Portugal."

The intelligence made her to whom it was addressed, give her eager attention to a person who in the next minute stepped from it. It was Don Emanuel himself—and as he carelessly glanced over the ladies who were waiting for their carriage to draw up

closer, he gave the Marquise and Ninon a slight bow of recognition, and was passing into the hotel, when his eye caught the glowing and intelligent countenance of Carenthéa, animated with an expression of mingled curiosity and satisfaction, as she was remarking the striking *tout ensemble* of his highly graceful and distinguished appearance.

The Prince suddenly stopped, and advancing towards the ladies, addressed to them some complimentary speeches, while his attention was fixed on the beautiful daughter of the house of Isenberg; who, intoxicated by this involuntary homage evidently extorted by her attractions, with that innate coquetry which characterized her, affecting to be equally unconscious and careless of his admiration, lightly ascended the carriage, in which she so placed herself, as to

be out of the reach of his further observation, at the very moment he was earnestly entreating of the Marquise the happiness of being introduced to her.

"That is a happiness which your highness must perceive the lady is not just at present disposed to grant," said the smiling Ninon, anticipating her mother's answer—"so you must be content with the promise that you shall enjoy it in the evening at the Duchess de Melcour's—till when adieu."

They then followed Carenthéa into the carriage which instantly drove off, from the window of which that exulting girl observed as the vehicle turned into another street, that the eager eye of Don Emanuel was still fixed on it.

"Never believe that I have any skill in divination," said Ninon, by

whom this circumstance was remarked as well as herself, "if we are not gratified by the exhibition of the Prince's dancing this evening."

CHAP. VII.

At the appointed hour, the young ladies repaired to the hotel of the Duke de Melcour, whom Carenthéa had not before seen. Judging from the youth and beauty of his Duchess, she had expected to find in him correspondent advantages. How great then was her surprise and disappointment, on beholding him the very opposite of what she had been prepared to see!

The Duke was old, infirm, corpulent, and strikingly heavy and unpleasant in his person, while his manners offered no contrast, which could in her eyes, excuse the choice of the lovely Rosaire de Saintville, for Ca-

renthéa was as yet too great a novice in fashionable life, to suspect that his title, fortune, and the high consideration attached to them, would be regarded as more than equivalent for his want of every other recommendation. Nor could she imagine how the wife of one so truly disgusting, in her opinion, could feel so gay, so happy, so light-hearted as did the volatile young Duchess!

In these reflections, however, she was not allowed much time to indulge, for the signal was soon given for their repairing to the toilet, and with it every thing like reflection was put to flight.

The boudoir, in which was placed the fine Grecian statue, the costuma of whose dress was to serve as the model of their own, was the room fixed on by her Grace as the theatre of their operations.

They found there in waiting, the *friseur* of the Duchess, who had been by her command, studying the graceful negligence with which the hair of this model was disposed—forming the most remarkable contrast to the stiff formality of the then Parisian fashion.

Le Papillon had at first shrugged his shoulders, and humbly remonstrated, but her Grace had silenced him, and he was now prepared implicitly to obey her instructions.

L'Attifet was also attending in the anti-room with her part of the preparations, when full of mirth and frolic the three ladies entered the boudoir.

Carenthéa was named by the Duchess as the first, on whose head Papillon was to make his *coup d'essai;* she accordingly took her place, and submitted her fine dark brown hair to his arrangement.

The *friseur* had braided and en-

twined *a la Grec,* a considerable part of it, and the Duchess was pronouncing that he was succeeding *a merveille,* when general surprise and dissatisfaction was created, by a domestic's tapping at the door to announce, that a gentleman below requested the honor of immediately seeing Madmoiselle Isenberg.

"Of seeing me!"—exclaimed the surprised Carenthéa, "Good heavens, was ever so unreasonable a request! pray tell the gentleman I am too particularly engaged to see any one at present."

The servant returned with this answer, and the party soon forgetting the interruption, resumed the subject on which they were before chatting, which was that of the rencontre of the morning with Don Emanuel, and Ninon was repeating her assertion, that he would lead out Carenthéa to the

dance that evening, when the same domestic again knocking at the door, gave into the hand of the attendant who opened it, a note, saying it was from the gentleman below, to Madmoiselle Isenberg.

"Well this is the most importunate beggar I ever knew!" cried the laughing Duchess, as taking it from the *fille de chambre,* she handed it to her guest. "Pray Heaven it may be some emmissary of Don Emanuel, if not the Prince himself. Bravo Papillon, you really outdo my most sanguine hopes of you, and for *la belle*! if she can but continue to retain her present complexion, it will want no improvement from art this evening."

The colour of Carenthéa, was indeed heightened to the most brilliant vermilion at the moment; for her first glance at the superscription of the note, informed her it was the hand of

her lover, whom she before imagined was still at Liancour.

"How very unlucky!" exclaimed she, after she had run over the few lines it contained—"But I must instantly go to him."

"To whom pray?" asked the astonished Duchess. "Is it the Baron?"

"No Madam," replied Carenthéa with hesitation—"but it is a—friend of—of—my brother."

"And is that a sufficient reason, my dear?" asked her Grace archly—who began to suspect the truth, and was resolved to torment her a little for the concealment of which she appeared desirous. "Can that be any possible reason, why you are to receive him at so unseasonable an hour? —assuredly not. Go Annette, and tell Pierre to inform the gentleman, that if he will call on Madmoiselle Isenberg when she is less agreeably en-

gaged than at present, she will receive him; but just now she begs to decline that honour."

"Ah no! not for worlds," cried the agitated Carenthéa, rising with emotion, and stopping the too ready Annette, "Not for worlds must you deliver such a message!"

The Duchess now seeing that she was really distressed, took her aside, and made her confess the terms on which she was with the gentleman in question; when, after some consideration, she kindly undertook to go to him herself, for the purpose of excusing the immediate compliance of her young guest with his request, by informing him that Carenthéa was then actually under the *friseur's* hands; and at the same time inviting him to join in the amusement of the evening.

The period of her Grace's absence was passed in much anxiety by her

perplexed visitor, but it was entirely dissipated by learning on her return, that Don Alphonso, perfectly satisfied with her excuse, was gone back to his hotel to dress, and had promised to return and pass the evening with them.

This awkward business settled, the labours of the toilet were again resumed; and after Carenthéa had been robed by the skilful Madam L'Attifet, under the direction of her elegant hostess, she was universally complimented on rivalling, both in symmetry and beauty, the exquisite model after whose costuma she was habited.

It will easily be believed, that the encomiums lavished on the Duchess, when she exhibited herself, adorned with the same elegant simplicity, were not less unbounded; nor let it be imagined that her Grace, in having yielded the *pas* to Carenthéa in the instance

of the toilet had acted inconsistently with her habitual egotism, nor was led into it by any unusual politeness, or consideration for her fair guest; No! the same idol *self*, which was wont to guide her actions, dictated her conduct on the present occasion, since by first seeing the effect of her experiments on Carenthéa, she doubted not of being able greatly to improve on them for herself.

Carenthéa, however, was as unsuspicious of the motive which had caused her hostess to give her the lead, as of the deception she had practised on her, in affirming that Don Alphonso was gone away perfectly satisfied with her excuse for not seeing him!—Nothing could be more remote from satisfaction than the feeling by which he was governed.

An unforeseen and fortunate discovery made by the Marquis de Vil-

lerose, of an error which had impeded his settlement of the affairs in hand, had enabled him to conclude the business some days earlier than at the period of their writing he had believed possible; and each feeling too impatient to follow those (from whom their enforced separation had already appeared a century) to delay joining them a moment beyond their engagement with the Baron, they set out for Paris the very morning after the courier who had borne the intelligence, that they hoped to be there in the course of eight days.

It was on the afternoon of that morning on which Viola, with the Countess, Pauline, the Baron, and Isidore, had departed for the chateau D'Aubry, that the friends arrived at the hotel which had been hired for their reception in the metropolis.

On alighting from their carriage,

the courier of the Marquis, who was that moment on the point of setting out for Liancour, presented his lord with a letter, with which he had been charged for him by Viola.

De Lerma impatiently enquired, if there were none for him, and on being answered in the negative, left Villerose to the uninterrupted perusal of his letter, which informed him of the departure of his mistress. Without saying to the Marquis whither he was going, Don Alphonso re-entered the carriage in much agitation, and ordered it to the hotel of the Count D'Aubry, where he hoped to discover the cause of Carenthéa's silence.

In answer to his enquiries on reaching it, the porter informed him that none of the Isenberg family, except the Baroness were at present there; and on his begging to see that lady, he was shewn into the very saloon which

Carenthéa had the day before received and consulted with Ninon de Saintville.

He found it empty, and while waiting the appearance of the Baroness, paced the apartment in much perturbation. At length mechanically taking up a book which lay on the table, he cast his unconscious eyes over its title, and again threw it down without remarking that something had dropped from within its leaves.

Again he walked the length of the saloon, and approaching the table on his return, for the first time, perceived a letter lying there.

In the momentary hope that it was one from Carenthéa to himself, which had been left there through the negligence of the domestic who ought to have delivered it to the courier, he eagerly snatched it up; but short-lived was this ray of consolation. 'On examining the superscription, he found

this letter, so carelessly left for the inspection of the first curious eye, desirous of prying into its contents, was his own!—Yes!—it was that very letter, in which he had a few days before with so much feeling and energy, laid open his whole heart to her, whom he now, for a few moments considered as unworthy the sentiments its every line expressed!

In a transport of disappointment and indignation he threw it into the fire, and with a species of gloomy satisfaction watched its reduction to ashes. "Perish thus the transcript of an ignoble passion,"—cried he—"which should not survive the knowledge that it is unrequited!"

From the fit of deep abstraction into which De Lerma afterwards sank, he was roused by the entrance of a servant, who presented him with a friendly note from the Baroness; in

which she told him, that just at that moment she found it impossible to quit her father; but on the morrow would most cordially give him a personal welcome. In the meantime, she doubted not he would receive one from Carenthéa, whom she permitted him to call on that evening at the Marquis de Saintville's, the old and much esteemed friend of the Baron, with whose family her second daughter was gone to spend a few days, with her's and her lord's approbation.

The kind tenor of these lines, and many favourable suggestions, which his returning hopes now whispered him, might excuse the apparently unpardonable want of consideration in his mistress, much calmed the late ferment of his mind: he re-entered his carriage, and directing it to be driven to the hotel de Saintville, gave a loose to the pleasing expectation of

again beholding within a few minutes that lovely countenance, on whose remembrance he could not dwell without strong emotions of affection rushing back to his heart.

Before De Lerma was set down at the Marquis's door, he had more than half reconciled himself to the fault of Carenthéa, by anticipating the atonement she would make him on his remonstrance. The deprecating look, the beautiful embarrassment, the blush, the hesitation, and finally, the reconciliation which would follow!—all passed through his imagination in review, and made him in the end, rather desirous of finding she had been a little to blame, than that he should lose all the delight of the recompense he might justly exact for her error.

Such was the sudden and remarkable change which had been wrought

in the mind of the enamoured Don Alphonso, when, in answer to the porter of the Marquis de Saintville, asking his commands, he desired immediate admission to Madmoiselle Isenberg.

"She is not at home," replied the man, "it is more than an hour since she went out with my young lady."

"And whither is she gone?"—demanded the disappointed De Lerma, from whose mind all his late delightful visions instantly vanished.—"Whither is Madmoiselle Isenberg gone?"

"Jaques," cried the porter to a footman who was at that moment crossing the hall—"ask my lady what answer I am to give this gentleman, who wishes to know where Madmoiselle Isenberg is to be met with?"

The five minutes which Jaques was

many ages to the impatient De Lerma. At length the servant returned, and informed him that the Marquise requested the pleasure of seeing him.

Don Alphonso, though infinitely vexed at the delay this must occasion, suffered himself to be conducted to the dressing room of Madam de Saintville; who, after considerable circumlocution, informed him, on finding that he came with the express permission of the Baroness, that Carenthéa with her daughter, was gone to pass the evening at the Duchess de Melcour's, whither she meant shortly to follow them.

The lover now taking a precipitate leave, again returned to his carriage, and ordered it to be instantly driven to the hotel of the Duke.

He was immediately admitted on reaching that nobleman's mansion, and conducted into an empty saloon; but

which it was evident, from the brilliancy of the illuminations and other decorations, was not long intended to remain so.

That Carenthéa—supposed by her mother to be remaining quietly at the hotel of the respectable Marquis de Saintville, should be found in that of a stranger (for he knew not that the Duchess formed a part of his family) and one whose whole appearance instantly inspired him with a belief, that it was a scene of fashionable dissipation, shocked and offended him, rendering the feelings with which he awaited the return of the messenger, whom he had sent to solicit an audience with Carenthéa, not less poignant than those which had assailed him at the hotel D'Aubry.

The perturbation of De Lerma's mind, had prevented him from recollecting that in merely requesting to be

received by Carenthéa, he had not made known his name; consequently the answer she returned, *that she was just then too particularly engaged to see him*, could not be meant as a slight to himself, whom a little cool reflection must have convinced, she had good reason to believe was at that very period at Liancour.

Incapable, however, in his present temper of mind of impartially weighing the truth, he gave way to the transport of indignation this message was calculated to excite, the first impulse of which prompted him, without deigning to solicit any explanation of conduct, which appeared to him wholly unpardonable, to quit instantly the hotel, and Paris the same evening, forswearing from that hour an insensible mistress, whom he now again believed to be utterly unworthy the tenderness he had lavished on her!

But this impulse speedily gave way to the resolution of first seeing her; and it was impossible for this determination to enter his bosom, unaccompanied by something like pleasure.

Under these feelings, he requested pen, ink, and paper, and wrote the few lines which had occasioned the interview he soon after had with the Duchess de Melcour.

De Lerma was leaning his throbbing temple against the mantle-piece; and seeking to prepare himself for the meeting, of which we was now every moment in expectation, when he heard the light step of a female tripping along the antiroom leading to the saloon. The door opened—and while his fine countenance was visibly impressed with the complicated feelings which struggled at his heart, he turned precipitately towards her.

It was not Carenthéa who met his

eager gaze! but one scarcely less lovely!

Grace, gaiety, and the ease of high fashion marked the manners of the Duchess, and gave a polished sportiveness to her *abordement*, so truly fascinating, as she advanced towards the receding stranger, that it seemed to challenge a far different reception from that which surprise and disappointment prompted him to give.

Yet notwithstanding the disadvantages under which his present circumstances naturally exhibited De Lerma, there was still in his figure a dignity, and in his fine eye a fire, which lost nothing from the evident agitation of his mind.

The Duchess was instantly struck with admiration of both, and perceiving at once that her intended pleasantry would be ill-timed, suddenly changed her winning smile into a look

of gentle sympathy, as in plaintive accents, thus addressed him.

"I know not how I shall pardon the fair author of my embassy, for drawing on me a reception so ungracious from one to whom I would fain have proved welcome; and I fear when I have made known the purport of the commands with which Madmoiselle Isenberg has charged me, I shall have rendered myself doubly unacceptable."

Don Alphonso whose native correctness instantly led him to atone for the breach of politeness into which his unguarded feelings had for a moment hurried him, now advancing to the Duchess, offered her an apology which she very readily accepted; and briefly told him the circumstances which prevented her guests complying with his request of immediately seeing him;

"Nay, nay,"—added she, perceiving

that her arguments did not appear so convincing to her grave auditor, as she thought reasonable, "do not oblige me to damp the pleasure of my young friend, by returning to her with the report that you have received with ingratitude, the assurance that she is now sacrificing to the graces expressly for the purpose of rendering herself more charming in your eyes this evening at my ball; to which you will consider this as engaging your attendance;" and taking while she spoke, from a silver standish an elegantly ornamented ticket of admission, she presented it to him.

"For *me* was she adorning herself?" asked the now greatly soothed Don Alphonso, accepting with a vow of acknowledgment the proffered favour, "Was she then aware of my arrival?"

Her Grace, too much engaged in

remarking and admiring the striking and sudden change which her words had wrought in the expression of his physiognomy to consider the object of this, to him, important question, obliged him to re-iterate it before she attempted to give him a reply.

"Was Carenthéa aware of my arrival?" repeated he with great earnestness.

"Oh no," cried the Duchess, entirely unconscious or careless of the mischievous effect her answer could not fail to produce; "nothing could be more unexpected than your arrival. You will notwithstanding be by no means the less welcome this evening be assured, at least to *one* of the party, for whom I can take upon *myself* to vouch!" And this she added with one of her most insinuating smiles.

"I will have the honour of attend-

ing you"—said the again cruelly depressed lover, making a vain effort to conceal the pain her Grace's last reply had given him, by annihilating the hope which she had a few minutes before awakened:—"Till when permit me to take my leave."

Thoughtless and unobserving as was the Duchess, she returned to Carenthéa fully impressed with the belief that there was some deep cause connected with her young guest, which had greatly moved De Lerma; and for the first time she felt a portion of envy at the circumstance, that one whom she regarded in every respect as greatly her inferior, should have possessed the power, though absent, of engrossing his attention, while she was herself condescending to bring into play her fascinations to attract him.

In the mean time, Don Alphonso,

dispirited and wretched, was driven back to the hotel in which he had left Villerose, whom he much wished to consult previous to returning to the Duke's. But disappointment, which had so closely followed his steps from the moment of his entering Paris, seemed still determined with equal vigilance to pursue him. The Marquis had been gone out nearly an hour, without leaving word whither he might be found.

This circumstance, though in itself of little moment, produced the effect, when added to the untoward vexations which had preceded it, of completing the hopeless depression which hung on him. He went however to his room for the purpose of preparing to fulfil his engagement with the Duchess; where we will leave him, and return to the three ladies, not one of whom was sufficiently satiated with

the compliments they were paying to each other, while the *eyes* of each were fixed on her *own* mirror, and her *thoughts* on *herself*, till the apartments thrown open to receive the company were nearly filled.

During this period, the remembrance of De Lerma had now and then stolen on the attention of two of the trio. The Duchess recalled from time to time, with approbation, his impressive and interesting person; and as she contemplated herself, felt persuaded that by persevering in the attempt to conquer the indifference with which he had in their late interview evidently regarded her, she must this evening infallibly succeed.

With Carenthéa also he divided those moments she could snatch from the admiration with which her present appearance inspired her. She considered whether, supposing Don Ema-

nuel should ask her to dance with him before the arrival of her lover, she was bound to make so great a sacrifice to that lover, as the pleading of a pre-engagement. By doing this, how could it to be generally known; and without actual demonstration who would believe—that she had effected what no other lady in Paris was able to do? An opportunity for so brilliant a triumph might never again occur in her whole life! With Don Alphonso she could at any time dance —with the Prince of Portugal perhaps never, unless this evening. What was to be done, supposing the alternative was to be allowed her? If she slighted De Lerma, he would certainly be deeply hurt and indignant; yet, had she not a thousand times offended him, and at her first pleasure lured him back to her feet? O yes! Why then should she in this instance hesitate?

Yet hesitate Carenthéa still did, when summoned by the Duchess to accompany her to the Ball-room, where the Duke had, at her request, taken on himself to do the honours till her arrival.

Sanguine as had been her Grace's expectation of the *sensation* which would be produced by the entrance of three lovely young women, in all the pride of youth and beauty, attired in habits of the most simple elegance, carefullyformed to shew all the fine proportions of their nymph-like figures, and exhibiting the most remarkable contrast to the formal costuma of the other ladies present—the effect of their appearance greatly exceeded her highly-raised hopes, and the buz of admiration met her ear on every side!

With that air of conscious superiority which on some occasions marked her demeanor, she led the way to the

upper end of the apartment, from whence she gracefully received and answered the compliments of the company. It was with surprise at his extraordinary punctuality, that she observed amongst those who first pressed around her, the hitherto invariably tardy, Don Emanuel! who had no sooner gone through the usual forms which good-breeding exacted towards the Duchess and Madmoiselle de Saintville, than he eagerly claimed the promise Ninon had in the morning made him.

Her Grace instantly, with an arch smile, introduced him to her young guest, and in the next minute Carenthéa was called on to decide the important question which she had been for the last hour revolving! The Prince solicited to be allowed the happiness of devoting himself to her that evening as her partner.

In a moment of such flutter and exultation, when every eye following those of Don Emanuel, were fixed on her in mingled admiration and curiosity, while the stakes for which she played were no less than *fashion* and *notoriety*, how greatly were the chances against the absent De Lerma! After a momentary struggle between a sense of right, and a powerful temptation to wrong, the Prince was accepted! and immediately leading her to a seat, he took his place beside her.

The first pang of compunction passed, which had assailed her on feeling that it was no longer within her power to recede from her engagement, however cruelly it might wound her lover —she endeavoured to banish the painful sensation this reflection awakened, by first resolving she would never again expose him to such a mortification, and then giving her whole at-

tention to her universally coveted partner.

By degrees the intoxicating homage he was paying her, and the general envy she believed she was exciting, had banished every thing from her mind but triumphant vanity, when, throwing her eyes round her, again to observe the effect produced on the company by his marked assiduity, she was suddenly electrified by an object which met her, at first, careless glance.

It was the figure of De Lerma, standing near her—pale,—agitated, intently gazing at her, as if unwilling to believe the evidence of his senses.

That this Portuguese Prince had been celebrated for his successful gallantries in the several courts of Europe which he had visited, since his disagreement with his royal brother

had induced him to quit his own, was a circumstance well known to Don Alphonso.* Nor was he ignorant

* This disagreement originated in the King of Portugal wishing to make the Prince his brother, then only seventeen years of age, Patriarch of Lisbon, contrary to his inclinations. Don Emanuel possessing a very fine figure, and fascinating manners, to avoid a measure so ill according with his disposition, indignantly quitted the kingdom and passed many years in visiting the several courts in Europe. That of Versailles seems to have proved most congenial to his taste, as, after his re-establishment in his native country, on the accession of his nephew to the throne, he was desirous of returning to France, and there passing the remainder of his days, provided he could have procured himself to be acknowledged as the Prince of Portugal. Madam Pompadour exerted her influence to effect this for him; but under the existing circumstances, it was deemed an impracticable measure.

of the refined artifice by which he was reported to have succeeded in gaining popularity amongst the ladies, to whom his high rank, and personal accomplishments, were too frequently a sufficient passport.

It was acting on his usual policy that he had opened his first Parisian *campaign*, by piquing its fair inhabitants into an emulation to attract *him*, in preference to prematurely laying himself out to please them; since experience had taught him that, by once exciting a spirit of rivalry, he generally paved the way to easy conquest, when he should select any particular object whom he wished to gain.

The heart of De Lerma had repeatedly urged, on his way to the hotel de Melcour, that if Carenthéa was at all susceptible of affection for him, after the disappointments she had already given him, he should find her

anxiously watching the moment of his arrival. With such impressions, he for some time vainly sought her in the several apartments filled with company through which he passed. At length reaching the ball-room, her well known countenance met his eager eye. He approached—and found her surrounded by admirers, yet giving her exclusive and delightful attention to one, with whom, from the libertinism of his character, he thought it almost contamination for her to converse.

Spell-bound, and suffering under an agony, such as he never before experienced, the unhappy lover had been standing for some time fixedly regarding her, before he excited her notice! Never had her person appeared to him so transcendantly lovely; yet the very taste which had so exquisitely set off her charms, wound-

ed his delicacy by the general notice it drew on her from its singularity.

The conscious eye of Carenthéa instantly sank under his penetrating scrutiny; her late gay spirits at once fled, and so remarkable was the change which suddenly took place in her whole appearance, that the attention of the Duchess (who at the moment of her recognizing Don Alphonso had turned to her to ask some question) spontaneously followed the same direction her eyes had taken, with a view to discover the *cause* of so striking an effect.

The sight of De Lerma at once explained the mystery, and re-called the intention which she had in her late bustle nearly forgotten, that of seeking to improve her intimacy with him. With this view she arose, and approaching him, in a very flattering manner, welcomed him to her fété;

then inviting him to a seat beside her, she placed him between Carenthéa and herself. De Lerma had received the compliments of her Grace with a silent bow of acknowledgment, and mechanically obeyed the mandate which placed him at the elbow of his greatly disconcerted mistress.

Could he six hours before have believed it possible that, after an absence which had appeared an age to him, he should, on finding himself so very near her that his arm touched her robe, be without the wish of addressing her! Yet such was the fact.

It had so happened, that the moment after De Lerma took his station beside Carenthéa, the Portuguese Ambassador, who had approached Don Emanuel while the Duchess was complimenting him, solicited the honour of a few minutes conference with the Prince; on which immediately rising

his Highness walked with him to the other extremity of the apartment, unconsciously leaving his trembling partner in a situation most truly embarrassing.

At length, unable longer to support the very painful silence of her lover, she turned towards him, and without venturing to lift her eyes to his, asked him if he had seen her mother since his arrival in Paris.

The tones of that much loved voice, uttered with a timidity he had never before remarked in her, for a moment seemed to allay the storm which had before raged in his bosom; and after a short struggle, he with much emotion said, "Oh Carenthéa! is it thus we should have met?—but the kind and unsuspicious Baroness knew not to what she was exposing me, in permitting my seeking you this evening at the hotel de Saintville!"

"You have then seen my mother?" interrupted Carenthéa eagerly.

Don Alphonso now attempted to explain in what way Madam Isenberg's communication had reached him; and in doing so, the discovery of his slighted and unanswered letter, rushed back to his mind. Again he had become plunged in gloomy silence, when the Prince roused him from his apparent abstraction by returning to inform his partner, that the dancing was about to commence.

Carenthéa, who without knowing half the circumstances which had conspired so deeply to wound her lover, was conscious he had much reason to resent her conduct, had remarked with an uneasiness which totally unfitted her for enjoying any thing like pleasure that evening, the alarming perturbation of his mind. She would now have given worlds

never to have accepted the invitation of the Duchess, unsanctioned by her mother; or having done so, not to have engaged her hand that night to any but her lover. It was now however too late to recede, and without daring to notice the effect of the Prince's words on De Lerma, she allowed him to conduct her reluctant steps to the dance.

This seemed the very crisis of the lovers' fates. Don Alphonso followed her to the set, and addressing her in a tone which rendered her motionless from surprise and terror, he said—"Yet one word Madam—had you engaged your hand before you knew of my arrival?"

The downcast countenance of the too conscious Carenthéa, too evidently bore witness of the circumstance which justified his fears of her indifference towards him.

"Speak, Madam, I adjure you," added he solemnly; "Avow, that you have this evening, knowing that I should be here to claim what I weakly believed my right, conferred it on another?"

"It is too true," she answered faintly.

"I am satisfied," cried De Lerma in a voice which made her shudder, and henceforth release you from the humiliating necessity of all future deception on my account."

Having said this, he turned indignantly from her, and without waiting a reply instantly quitted the apartment, leaving Carenthéa for awhile overwhelmed with surprise and dismay.

But the first shock passed, that native pride which had deserted her while she felt humiliated from the consciousness of deserving his re-

proaches, returned to relieve and support her, when she believed he was inclined to carry his resentment beyond the limits which, she thought, her fault deserved. She now in her turn, felt the injured person, and rallying her naturally high spirit, resolved that her lover should not enjoy the satisfaction of knowing the effect his resentment had, in reality, produced on her; for she could not believe that he would absolutely quit the hotel de Melcour, without seeking some explanation or reconciliation. She resolved, therefore, to deprive him of the gratification of discovering the uneasiness he had given her, and rallying her scattered spirits, affected to receive with a pleasure she was far from feeling, the flattering attentions of the Prince.

Just as the first dance was finished, she was accosted by one whom she

did not know to have been in Paris. It was the Chevalier Florio, who had scarcely gone through the usual greeting on their meeting, when he called on her to explain the singular phenomenon of his having met Don Alphonso, departing alone from an assembly of which she formed one.

"Is he then actually gone?" eagerly demanded Carenthéa.

"I saw him step into his carriage the moment after I quitted mine," replied Florio, "and heard him in answer to his servant's asking whither he would be driven, impatiently repeat, home."

This was a stroke for which Carenthéa was not prepared. With the motive which had urged her to support a gaiety she did not feel, she equally lost the wish and power of longer keeping up the affectation of it. Those playful graces which had

attended her first entering the ball-room, now entirely fled. Her eye, then sparkling with joyous exultation, lost its dazzling brilliancy, dulness and langour usurped its place, while the colour late blooming as the opening rose, entirely faded from her polished cheek! Scarcely could Don Emanuel recognize in his now absent, lifeless partner, the same attractive girl, the arch naïvete, of whose animated countenance had first fascinated his senses, and inspired him with a lively desire to devote himself to her for the evening!

He became persuaded he had mistaken her character, and at length, thoroughly fatigued with the vain efforts he had been making to amuse her, or keep up a conversation in which she scarcely took any part, he with pleasure heard her declare she should not dance any more.

The Duchess soon after joined them, and challenged his Royal Highness to make one of a card-party with her. He gladly availed himself of the excuse it offered him, and retiring with her to another apartment, delighted her Grace by the severity with which he ridiculed his late partner.

The Chevalier took his place beside the dispirited Carenthéa, when the Prince had left her; from whom he learnt some particulars which accounted for her visible uneasiness; and Madam de Saintville soon after finding that her young charge was very desirous of retiring, left the still untired and lively Ninon under her sister's care, agreeing that she should sleep that night at the hotel de Melcour. This settled, she returned to her own, with Carenthéa, whom Florio accompanied to the carriage, and on whom he

promised that he would certainly call the next morning; after which he took his leave for the night.

Never had one passed so unhappily with Carenthéa in her whole life, as this apparently endless night! For it was spent in self-condemnation and bitter regret, mingled with a pretty strong sensation of indignation towards her lover, whom, judging from the unlimited empire she had hitherto held over him, she did not believe would have dared to manifest so open a displeasure towards her.

Nor did that lover in the mean time pass it with more tranquillity. His bosom was a prey to the most tormenting jealousy—not of any particular object, but of his want of power over the heart of her, whom he now believed to be loved only for his misery.

On his arrival at the hotel of the Marquis, he found that his friend had

been for some time retired to rest, and though without the hope of enjoying it himself, he went immediately to his own apartment, where, instead of going to bed, he passed his time in taking a retrospective view of the conduct of his mistress, from the hour in which she first became so.

Now that he was removed from the sphere of her magic presence, he viewed in a very different light from that in which it had at the time appeared to him, her general behaviour, and a thousand little nameless circumstances, trifling in themselves, assumed an importance in the present state of his mind, little favourable to Carenthéa. He contrasted the manners of Viola towards his friend, with those he had experienced from her sister; and as he dwelt on that difference, became more and more convinced, that she never could have loved him.

He now felt surprised that he should have wanted instances, so strongly marked as those he had experienced since his arrival in Paris, to rouse him to a sense of what must, but for his own infatuation, have been long ago sufficiently evident!

Yet in the inference he drew on comparing the conduct of Carenthéa with that of Viola, De Lerma was unjust; and equally so in concluding that, because her gay and thoughtless nature led her often into wantonly giving him pain, it necessarily followed that he was an object of indifference to her. Next to the gratification of her vanity, (which was ever paramount to every other consideration) he certainly occupied the place nearest her heart: and as to this very vanity, she owed some of those wiles which had seduced him into love, he was unreasonable in expecting to

find, united with them, the refined delicacy and sensibility which distinguished her lovely sister :—sentiments incompatible with the species of fascinating coquetry, by which she had so long rendered him her willing slave.

While the very faults of Carenthéa had in many instances contributed to complete his captivation, the grave dignity of her lover's character had possessed a power over her volatile mind, which no one of a disposition more like her own could have done. The very contrariety of their natures had been in reality the original magnet which drew them to each other ; yet unfortunately many of her witcheries, calculated as they were to charm, even while they wounded the partial spectator, would not bear the test of retrospective examination, particularly when viewed through the mist of prejudice.

Such was precisely the light in which Don Alphonso, under the influence of his present feelings, considered them; and the result was, a perfect conviction that he had never been beloved: consequently, that pride and honour equally called upon him to tear from his heart an object, with whom to unite himself would be to insure a life of the same tormenting jealousy which now racked his bosom.

Thus resolved, he sat down to explain to the Baron, though without descending to the particulars which had brought about so remarkable a revolution in his wishes—his deep impression, that an union between Carenthéa and himself could not possibly constitute the happiness of either.

The soul of Don Alphonso was elevated and truly noble—his letter was a transcript of that soul. Though decisive in its purpose, a sentiment of

deep regret mingled itself with his entire renunciation of the honour intended him by the projected alliance. He declared that under the heavy disappointment which had fallen on him, he found himself incapable of seeking permission to bid a personal adieu to a family, to every member of which he was so truly attached, previous to his setting out on his return to his native country, whither he meant immediately to repair, after he had passed three days at Dauphin; at which place he should during that period, await any commands the Baron or Sigismond might be desirous of conveying to him.

Such was the substance of a letter, written by De Lerma under the most violent agitation of mind, which, after impatiently running over, he sealed and directed; then summoning his valet, he gave orders for immediate pre-

parations to be made for his journey; and inquired if the Marquis had yet rung his bell?

He was answered that Villerose had risen very early, and was already gone out—a circumstance which he learnt with accumulated regret, as he was particularly anxious to see him before his departure, for he had much to say to that friend, whom he had long been accustomed to make the depositary of his secret motives of action.

On interrogating the valet of the Marquis, he learnt that his lord had ordered to be driven to the gardens of the Luxemberg, whither De Lerma resolved on following him, as he could not reconcile himself to depart without seeing him.

It was true that he might *write* an explanation of the cause which had occasioned his sudden departure; but he felt that to relate it verbally to his

friend, would be a consolation with which he could not dispense. Villerose might possibly find some excuse to palliate the conduct of Carenthéa; at all events he wished him to guess what he could not prevail on himself to impart, that the desire which would be nearest his heart, if he *did* quit her, would be the knowing in what way she would take his voluntary resignation of that claim, which she had given him to her hand.

Carefully depositing his letter to the Baron, in his desk, he now set out in the pursuit of his friend; the hope unconsciously springing up in his bosom, as he proceeded towards the Luxemberg; that Villerose would be of opinion, and find means to convince him also, that he was about to act too precipitately in quitting his mistress without seeking some personal explanation.

Full of these thoughts, he left his carriage on reaching the gardens, and learning from a person of whom he made enquiries, that a gentleman, answering his description of the Marqus, had struck into a particular walk sometime before, he eagerly followed the same direction in the hope of overtaking him; but vain was his search! The Marquis had in reality quitted the gardens, by a different door, nearly at the same time he had entered them. After wandering till he lost his patience in a fruitless search, Don Alphonso came to the resolution of acting; as he was now firmly persuaded his friend would advise, and at once seek an interview with Carenthéa.

It was about noon that he again stopped at the door of the hotel De Saintville, and enquired for Madmoiselle Isenberg.

The young lady was at home; and the servant believed, alone, as she had requested his lady to excuse her being present, while a large party who were then with the Marquis, remained there. The late anger of Don Alphonso melted away, as his heart instantly suggested the idea, that it was in the hope of seeing *him*, she had chosen to remain alone that morning. Had he been so very indifferent to her, as he had lately apprehended, could this have happened? Ah no!—she doubtless was conscious of being furnished with reasons which would exculpate her from the most heavy part of the offence, he believed, she had given him; and she had condescended to await his coming to claim them!

Such were the thoughts which rapidly passed through the mind of De Lerma, as he followed the domestic across the hall to the door of the

apartment in which he imagined Carenthéa to have been sitting.—He threw it open—and the impatient lover on entering, found it empty!

It appeared, however, from a chair placed near a table on which were pens, ink and paper, that it had been recently occupied by some one who had been engaged in writing. Could Carenthéa have been that person? Had she deigned to address him, after the severity of his conduct towards her on their last meeting?

He advanced to the table as these questions passed swiftly through his mind, and cast his eyes on the paper, from the upper sheet of which a part was torn away, as if the writer had been dissatisfied with the beginning of a letter.

His hopes strengthened as he noticed this, and in the next minute perceived scattered on the floor, some very small

fragments of the paper. De Lerma's attention, guided by a kind of track they formed across the saloon, was now drawn to an unfastened door which opened on the garden, and passing through it, he entered a plantation of evergreens.

The morning was so fair and mild, that it might have been mistaken for one of early spring. He traversed a thickly enclosed walk which wound to the left, but had not proceeded far, when his course was arrested by the sound of a well known voice, which, from an adjoining avenue, vibrated on his ear.

It was heard in conversation with a companion, and in the next moment he recognized the second speaker to be the Chevalier Florio. They soon passed so close to the enclosure which separated them, that through the dis-

parting branches, he discerned that

the Chevalier was familiarly leaning on her arm, and questioning her with a degree of freedom, which soon restored him to the tone of mind that dictated his letter to the Baron.

"You would have me believe then," said her companion, "that it was to fulfil your appointment with *me*, and not in the hope that your jealous Catalonian would come and beg your pardon, that you were induced to ask the Marquis's permission to remain alone this morning?

"You will seriously offend me by continuing to doubt it," replied Canthéa warmly.

"And you positively deny," rejoined Florio in a tone of incredulity, "that regret at having displeased the grave Spaniard, has any share in your present *mauvaise humeur?*"

"Nay, if you love me," exclaimed the lady with an air half peevish, half

coaxing, "do not mortify me by such humiliating suspicions, Don Alphonso is surely master of his own temper, as I thank Heaven, am of my inclinations and actions."

"Have you yet found out what your real inclinations are?" asked Florio archly.

"If there exist a being who has less right than any other to ask that question," replied she pettishly, "surely, the inconsistency of your conduct, after your protestations to me the evening before we left Isenberg, proves that one to be——"

The hand of Florio, unceremoniously pressed on the lips of his companion, stopped her further utterance, and made Don Alphonso, with the precipitation of one who flees from an object abhorrent to his sight, return to his carriage.

The first impulse which had actu-

ated him, was that of instantly punishing, in the presence of her, on whom to think was nearly madness, this presumptuous liberty. But to what end punish him? *He* had succeeded the favourite of the preceding evening! and might probably himself give place on the next, to some new rival, who would attract her roving fancy. No! there was but one part left for him; it was that of tearing her from his heart forever, of thinking of her, in future, only with the contempt she merited!

Such were the resolutions with which he reached the Marquis's hotel, where he found every thing prepared for his departure.

Villerose was not yet returned, but that was now of little comparative consequence. He had at present nothing on which to consult him; for what could the Marquis urge which

could contradict the evidence of his own senses! One path alone was open to the miserable Don Alphonso, which could offer the hope of recovering his lost tranquillity; it was that of quitting for ever the enchantress, of whose unworthiness to retain a place in his affections he could no longer doubt.

De Lerma entered the mansion of his friend, merely to deliver the letter he had written to the Baron, to a trusty messenger, with a charge to give it into his own hands; and to address a few lines to Villerose, informing him that he should soon learn the particulars of that misfortune, which had occasioned his sudden departure from Paris. He then having executed these necessary duties, set out for Dauphin, where he resolved on awaiting the reply of the Baron.

Those who have loved like Don Alphonso, and suddenly seen all the

sweet visions to which that passion has given birth vanish from their sight, can alone conceive the state of mind in which his journey was performed. From Dauphin he again addressed to Villerose an incoherent complaint of his unhappiness, yet without detailing the events which had led to it; but to his surprise no answer from that friend reached him during his stay there.

On the morning of the second day from that on which he had left Paris, he received a short letter from the Baron, which rendered the farther procrastination of his journey unnecessary. That nobleman politely, yet coldly accepted his resignation of the hand of his daughter, and concluded by saying, that Sigismond united with the rest of the family in wishing him a pleasant journey whithersoever he was going.

Nothing now remaining to retard

the progress of the unfortunate lover towards Spain, he immediately proceeded on his solitary and comfortless way, which we will leave him to pursue, and return to the hotel D'Aubry to inquire what happened there after Carenthéa had left it with the Duchess de Melcour and Madmoiselle de Saintville, to visit the *Temple of the Graces*, at Madam L'Attifet's.

END OF VOL. III.

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